

Insight and Beyond

Class 11, One Part Only: January 8th 2010

Insight, Chapter 6 §2.3:

“The Aesthetic Pattern of Experience”

&

“Art” (*Topics in Education*, Ch. 9)

Summary of Material

Introductory remarks: Due to a technical difficulty, the audio for this class, originally given on November 18, 2009, was lost. The presentation you will be watching is a re-recording that was done on January 8, 2010. Unfortunately the students were on break, so the lecture has no student participation.

This class is less talking about art, but a set of exercises of participating in art works, so that you the viewer can explore and appropriate your own aesthetic pattern of experience.

The Meaning of Art: “The work is an invitation to participate.”

I invite you to participate in works of art in this class.

The paintings presented in the slides for this class are not of the best quality. I encourage you to visit a local museum or obtain a book with high quality reproductions to develop more fully your aesthetic patterning of experiencing.

Time allotted for contemplation of Degas' painting *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera* (1872).

Guided discussion of elements in the painting noticed as eyes explore it.

Colour, shape, lighting, geometry, linear elements, grouping of figures, movement.

Discussion of prior observations made by the students in the class while they viewed the painting.

Other things to notice while viewing a painting: the path followed by the eye, the 'rhythm' of the painting, etc.

Notice also the feelings you experience as you explore the world of the painting.

Art and the Patterning of Experience

Lonergan's definition of Art, inspired by Suzanne Langer's *Feeling and Form*: "Art is the objectification of a purely experiential pattern."

In *Topics in Education*, Lonergan slowly unfolds each word in his definition and his philosophy of art.

By the word "pure" Lonergan is distinguishing the aesthetic pattern from instrumentalizations of experience (e.g., by practical and/or intellectual concerns) — those patterns will interfere with the aesthetic pattern, and vice versa.

“Pure” as contrasted with instrumentalization of experience is comparable to what Kant means by the purposeless purpose of play (*Spiel*).

The aesthetic experience and its relation to other patterns of experience is not an ‘either/or’ relation.

The word “pattern” points to the importance of *internal relations* among the experiences.

The primacy of internal relations (among the colours, tones, etc) over external relations (representational art).

Representational relations are not the primary sources of the meaning of aesthetic experiences.

Aristotle’s comparison of a well-lived human life to a work of art: no element can be added or subtracted from a masterpiece or a virtuoso performance.

Example of the chair in Degas’ painting and its role in the internal relations in the painting — what happens if even something minimal is removed from a masterpiece.

The aesthetic patterning of experiencing is something that has to be learned. One has to learn how to let oneself participate in and enter into the internal relations of a work of art, to enter into the space of the painting.

Slide of Piet Mondrian's painting *Landscape with Farmhouse* (circa 1906).

This is somewhat representational, but it is not a very good representation; but that is Mondrian's point. He is drawing us into a world of colour and shape and association and their relations *in* the space of the painting.

The development of Mondrian's abstract style as an exploration of the rhythms of the landscape; note the elimination of external relations and the exploration of internal relations.

Guided contemplation of Mondrian's geometric painting reveals its underlying biological forms and rhythms.

We have to take time to enter into and participate in the biological rhythms in the painting.

Loneragan's view of "art as feeling recollected in tranquillity" (borrowed from Wordsworth).

Aesthetic patterning is something we *do*. It is a kind of mediated, active passivity which needs to be *learned* and *developed*.

Aesthetic associations are those intrinsic to the patterns, not extrinsic.

But the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic itself needs to be learned. For example, a viewer may bring in personal, or historical or psychoanalytic associations in her or his viewing.

These may be mere projections extrinsic to the artwork; but they could be intrinsic. What are those elements doing *in* the painting?

We need to learn how to enter into an art work, and let it be our guide, and not impose preconceived ideas on our viewing.

Only way to do this is to spend lots of time entering into the aesthetic pattern of experience, and to let the other patternings fade away.

Slide of August Renoir's portrait entitled *Madame Renoir* (1884).

Practice in "feeling recollected in tranquillity."

Discussion of noticing the visual elements and the associations inspired by the painting.

The significance of the hat being associated with halos in other paintings — *not* an extrinsic association. Interplays of colour and shape shared among paintings across history. Paintings as situated in the history of art.

What place is this painting? Not in ordinary space, not extrinsically related to "real" Space.

The Elemental Meaning and Ulterior Significance of Art.

Elemental meaning of a painting transcends words about the painting.

Elemental meaning only accessible by participating.

Artworks open up the world's majesty, goodness and adventure in very concrete ways.

Georgia O'Keefe's *Oriental Poppies* (1928).

Meaning as beyond words, as elemental.

Prior to formulating insights, there is an elemental unity of the *subject* in act with the *object* in act.

A painting needs the participation of human viewers to become an aesthetic entity.

The elemental meaning is our discovery of ourselves as aesthetically patterning.

“Subject in act, emergent, ecstatic, standing out.”

Prior to freedom of choice is the freedom to pattern our own experience, to transcend mere biological determinism.

Opens up to us the ways that we can be aesthetically alive and creative.

The aliveness of paintings arises from our participation.

Paul Cézanne's *Rocks: Forest of Fontainebleau* (1894-98) — its trees and stones are “alive.”

Time allotted for contemplation.

Elemental meaning and ulterior significance: Why does Lonergan situate the aesthetic pattern second after the biological pattern in *Insight*?

Humans are capable the liberation from using experiencing merely to survive, toward freely patterning experience in the aesthetic mode, to focus on beauty rather than survival.

In Chapter 6 of *Insight*, Lonergan suggests art's ability to put us in touch with our elemental wonder — something he explores more systematically in Chapter 12.

Artistic experience is companioned by intellectual inquiry in its pure unrestrictedness.

Scientific inquiry is heuristic, guided; practical commonsense inquiry is restricted; in aesthetic patterning, we encounter our wondering in all its infinity and unrestrictedness.

Letting our experiencing and wonder take us where it will.

Wassily Kandinsky's *Black Lines #1 B9* (1913).

Discussion of the kinetic (motion) qualities of the painting — the motion of course is *us*.

What sounds would naturally accompany this play of shapes and colours?

Ulterior significance — the painting and indeed the visible world as sign and cipher of something transcendent — something unnamed, encountered only by participating.

El Greco's *View of Toledo* (1597).

A painting of a city, but communicates more than a city. Forces carrying the city like a ship on the sea.

The implied, invisible presences of the painting as part of its ulterior significance.

Art as a “withdrawal for a return.”

We withdraw into aesthetic experience so as to return to a fuller actuation, an enriched, concrete dramatic pattern of experience.

The mistake of the aesthete: failing to allow living to be transformed by time spent experiencing in the aesthetic pattern.

Art criticism as a further withdrawal for another return: return to the aesthetic pattern with enriched capacity for noticing and participating.

This class has oscillated between aesthetic experiencing and the withdrawal into philosophical reflections, so as to return to the aesthetic pattern.

The achievement of the good art critic/historian/philosopher: enrich aesthetic patterning so as to then enrich our living out of our part in the drama of human history.

The Aesthetic vs. the Artistic Patterns of Experiencing.

Aesthetic patterning is the participation in the ‘purely experiential pattern.’

Aesthetic patterning is heightened by artworks, but can also arise in response to “ordinary” natural or human scenes.

Artistic patterning actively works to find the proper ways to express the aesthetically patterned experience.

The aesthetic patterning is veiled, not-yet-unobjectified; the artistic pattern seeks insights and techniques in order to express and unfold that aesthetic patterning.

Artistic patterning “selects” from the complex mixture of sensations in order to facilitate the entry of the viewer into the aesthetic patterning opened up by her or his artistic expression.

Just as the “inner word” formulates the intelligible content of an insight, so also the artist expresses the implicit and enfolded elemental meaning of the aesthetic pattern.

The Meaning of Paintings.

The meaning of painting is the *space* into which we are invited — not an ordinary space — not a space “represented” by the painting.

Meaning of the place more elemental than the Space of Chapter 5, where the place is situated in an explicitly formulated network of intelligible relations.

Making a new world visible, and/or the old world visible with new meanings.

Examples of such spaces: Cézanne’s *Mont St. Victoire*, Van Gogh’s *Starry Night*.

The Meaning of Architecture:

Architecture embodies the places and 'ways' of a particular group's collective life.

Conclusion: an invitation to further explore the aesthetic mode of experiencing artworks and the world.

End of Class

Insight and Beyond

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“Art” (*Topics in Education*, Ch. 9)

Introductory remarks: Due to a technical difficulty, the audio for this class, originally given on November 18, 2009, was lost. The presentation you will be watching is a re-recording that was done on January 8, 2010. Unfortunately the students were on break, so the lecture has no student participation.

PL 772: Insight & Beyond, I

Fall 2009

Insight, Chapter 6 §2.3:

“The Aesthetic Pattern of Experience”

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“Art” (*Topics in Education*, Ch. 9)

Welcome again to “Insight and Beyond.” As you may have discovered from listening to the Introduction to the previous class, we had some technical problems on two of our class days in November 2009. We are re-recording now the second of those class days; and this is the one on the *Aesthetic* and the *Artistic Patterns of Experience*.

We're focussing not only on the very, very, short section on the Artistic Pattern of Experience in Chapter Six of *Insight*, but also Chapter Nine of *Topics in Education*, which is drawn from a series of lectures that Lonergan gave at Xavier University in Cincinnati about two years after he published *Insight*. And it's the place where he really expands on the basic ideas that he puts down in a very, very compact and underdeveloped form in *Insight*. It's a very rich text and we used it in this class to supplement some of his writings on other topics in *Insight*; but especially, I think, his understanding, his thoughts on art and the Aesthetic and the Artistic Patterns of Experience are most prominent and most well-done in that Chapter from *Topics in Education*. So we're going to do that.

This class is less talking about art, but a set of exercises of participating in art works, so that you the viewer can explore and appropriate your own aesthetic pattern of experience.

Most of this class is going to be — not so much talking *about* art, though I will do some of that — it will be, instead, inviting you to actually have the exercises of appropriating the Aesthetic Pattern of Experience especially. And in order to do that this presentation, the PowerPoint presentations that accompany this Echo360 recording, are going to feature quite a number of slides of paintings. And in order to have your focus be more on the paintings and less on me, I'm going to turn down the lights a little bit — it was something that the students suggested that we do, not so much hopefully to mute my presence as to allow them to see the slides more vividly! And I think, even though the slides come through on the Echo360 more vividly than they do in class without the distracting light, nevertheless, I think it would be helpful for the purposes of this presentation to turn down the lights; so I'm going to do that now!

The Meaning of Art: “The work is an invitation to participate.”

I invite you to participate in works of art in this class.

The Meaning of Art

“The work is an invitation to participate.”

Topics in Education (219).

So in *Topics in Education* one of the things that Lonergan says is that “**The work** [of art] **is an invitation to participate ...**” (CWL 10, *Topics in Education*, p. 219). And so rather than talk about what it is to participate, what we did in class back in November, and what I’m going to do — what I’m going to invite you to do as a viewer of this, is to actually participate in a work of art.

Degas, *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera*.

The paintings presented in the slides for this class are not of the best quality. I encourage you to visit a local museum or obtain a book with high quality reproductions to develop more fully your aesthetic patterning of experiencing.

Time allotted for contemplation of Degas’ painting *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera* (1872).

This painting is by Edward Degas (1834-1917). It's entitled *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera*, painted in 1872. And as with this, and as with all the other slides here, I apologize for the poor resolution quality. Most of these slides were scanned in from plates that I have in my own personal collection from a series of books on Art done back in the nineteen-seventies by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. And so the scanning in some cases is of less than perfect quality. And I do invite you to visit a museum near yourself, or to get a book of paintings of high quality reproductions, to conduct this exercise further. But for the present we're going to have to go with the quality of resolution of the paintings that we have here.

When Lonergan says that “**The work [of art] is an invitation to participate**” (*CWL* 10, *Topics in Education*, p. 219), in this case this painting is an invitation to participate. He's saying that *the painting is inviting us to explore it with our eyes*. And so I ask you to do that. I'm going to be silent for considerable periods of time here. And you might also want to put the controls on pause, so that you can take some time to do this. But in observing, in actually entering into the Aesthetic Pattern of Experience and viewing a painting like this one, there's no substitute for just taking time, and letting your eyes explore the painting. So I invite you to do that.

5.28 — 6.00 allotted for contemplation of this work of art

Just let your eyes move around the painting to wherever they seem to be most naturally and spontaneously drawn. And in the spirit of self-appropriation, pay attention to what you're noticing. ...

6.14 — 6.48 allotted for contemplation of this work of art

Guided discussion of elements in the painting noticed
as eyes explore it.

Colour, shape, lighting, geometry, linear elements,
grouping of figures, movement.

Discussion of prior observations made by the students
in the class while they viewed the painting.

Other things to notice while viewing a painting: the
path followed by the eye, the 'rhythm' of the painting,
etc.

Notice also the feelings you experience as you explore
the world of the painting.

Degas, *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera*.

Let me now just share with you some of the things that I noticed, or [some of the things](#) that the students spoke about in class back in November, and noticed! And I think the first student who spoke said that she noticed the red in the bow of the ballerina with her back turned to us on the far right. ... And another student said that she noticed that the red in the fan on the chair was the same as the red in the sash on the ballerina. ... And then another student said that they noticed the ballerina on the far left ... and her posture. ... And then others that they noticed that grouping of the man standing and the man seated, and three ballerinas, looking in the direction of the ballerina on the left. ...

And then others said that they noticed that everyone seemed to be connected by that red line that runs through the middle of the painting ... which, because of the ballerina a little left of centre with her pink shoes, [and one foot](#) lifted up, looks like the bar, the practice-bar for stretching. ... And yet, there's a great deal of separation by the painted spaces, a separation of what looks like ... what is an arch ... looks like perhaps there's a mirror in the arch, or a window in the arch. And the bar connects, and the arch separates.

And they said also that they noticed that, one way or another, everyone is in contact with someone else — that is to say, the colours and shapes of the figures of the people in this painting, all their colours, or their costumes, or their body parts, all touch at least one or two other people's figures, with the exception of the ballerina on the far left. And her connectedness with everybody else is much more tenuous, because it's only by means of that red bar, that red line, that runs horizontally through the middle of the painting.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

And people noticed that there's an awkwardness to her posture. She seems to have been stopped almost in the middle of a movement; and her left foot is turned in an awkward angle compared to the rest of the posture of her body.

In this reproduction, there's some imperfections — you will notice that the walls and the floors have alternating on a yellowish and purple-ish lines that's not in the original. It's one of the imperfections in this scan image: in that the wall to the extreme left is almost completely yellow; in the original it's a beige yellow — in the original. And it contrasts to the darker colour, the more shadowy part of the wall that runs horizontally through most of the painting. And it's almost as though a spotlight has been shined on the ballerina to the left.

And if you look over to the right, the seated figure has a [violin](#) bow resting on his right knee; and [what's](#) difficult to see in this reproduction is the violin, the lower part of which is stuck under his chin; and the upper part of it is somewhat obscured by the white sleeve of the man standing.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

And you might suppose that this is a rehearsal; and that the man standing is the ballet director, the master of the school, or the master [of](#) preparation for the ballet performance; and that the man seated is probably the violinist who is providing the music; and that the ballerina to the far [left](#)¹ has been stopped in the middle of her performance, and is being corrected, or instructed, by the man standing.

The students noticed that many, if not all, of the ballerinas are looking in the direction of the ballerina that's been stopped. They noticed also that in the opening behind the door to the far left, that there is a figure that looks to have a parallel to the figure of the ballerina.

¹ Pat actually said "to the far right" at this point, which seems to be a *lapsus linguae*.

So there are, so to speak, two foci in this painting. There's the focus of the ballerina to the left, with all that separation that isolates her, and the wall shining down upon her, and the various gazes directed in her direction. And then the second focus, surrounding the violinist and the conductor who is standing. And it's a much weightier focus to the right! There's a great deal of weight and volume of shapes in that focus, in comparison to the relative lightness or relative smallness of the figure of the ballerina herself.

And people also noticed other things about the ways in which the lines of the chair, the lines of the room, direct our gaze to the ballerina on the far left, and [sound uncertain] directs us back to that weighty focus that involves the conductor and the ballerinas.

Degas, *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera*.

I want to just stop there for a moment, and encourage you to explore it further. And if you do have access to a better quality print of this particular painting by Degas, I encourage you to spend some time with it yourself. And just notice, as you're doing it, how your eyes move, and what you're attracted to, what you notice, what you started out noticing, and what you are then drawn to notice, and what you are drawn to notice again.

This is what has to do with what Lonergan, and others, call *the rhythm* of the painting. And as you do that *I encourage you to pay attention also to how you are feeling, as you're exploring this painting.*

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

If you would like to put this session on pause, so you can spend a little more time with this painting, [please do so](#).

Art and the Patterning of Experience

Lonergan's definition of Art, inspired by Suzanne Langer's *Feeling and Form*: "Art is the objectification of a purely experiential pattern."

In *Topics in Education*, Lonergan slowly unfolds each word in his definition and his philosophy of art.

By the word "pure" Lonergan is distinguishing the aesthetic pattern from instrumentalizations of experience (e.g., by practical and/or intellectual concerns) — those patterns will interfere with the aesthetic pattern, and vice versa.

"Pure" as contrasted with instrumentalization of experience is comparable to what Kant means by the purposeless purpose of play (*Spiel*).

Art & the Patterning of Experience

"Art is the objectification of a purely experiential pattern." (*Topics*, 211).

"When we speak of a pure pattern, we mean the exclusion of alien patterns that instrumentalize experience." (*Topics*, 213).

At this point, however, we're going to move on! And I'll move on to what Lonergan presents as the definition of Art, or as *a definition* of Art. It's a definition that he says he came to — he in fact says that he's quoting Suzanne Langer in her book *Feeling and Form*. Now my good friend, and Lonergan scholar, Father Richard Liddy, Monsignor Richard Liddy, at Seton Hall University, did his dissertation on Lonergan and Langer on Art. And he read not only the entirety of *Feeling and Form* but also most of Langer's other works, and he assures me and all of us in the Lonergan community that Suzanne Langer never gives this definition of Art. It is not unusual for Lonergan to have read something, and to have gotten the basic insight from someone that he read, and then to attribute to them the insight that he got from reading them, even though they didn't explicitly state it. And this definition of art is certainly one of those instances.

“**Art**”, says Lonergan is “**an objectification of a purely experiential pattern.**” (*Topics in Education*, p. 211). And each word in Lonergan's definition is significant, and we're going to open up that definition piece by piece; and see how it reflects Lonergan's Philosophy of Art, and his account of the Aesthetic and the Artistic Patterns of Experience.

And the first thing that Lonergan does, or one of the first things that Lonergan does to declare what he means by that definition is to emphasize the word, the phrase “pure.”

“**When we**”, he means I Lonergan, “**speak of a pure pattern we mean the exclusion of alien patterns that instrumentalize experience.**” (*Topics in Education*, p. 213).

Now the **first** of two alien patterns that Lonergan specifically mentions in the context of elaborating what he means by this **is** the patterning of experience that takes place in the *practical common sense mode*.

When we're driving a car down the highway, and I mean say driving a car say in an urban setting as opposed to say driving on an interstate highway, we don't have time to allow our eyes and our ears to explore what we see or what we hear with the leisureliness that we were just doing in looking at the “Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera” a moment ago. If we were to do that, the sights and sounds that we're supposed to be paying attention to, to keep ourselves and other people using the highway safe would escape us, because we would be dwelling on the wrong things.

When we're in a practical mode of experience, whether the practical mode is driving a car, or hanging a picture in the house, or fixing a faucet, or figuring out how to get a computer to function properly, how to unblock our email, whatever, or trying to figure out how to balance our chequebook, we can't allow our experiencing to just explore — or, we can't allow ourselves to just explore our experiencing in the way that we do when we stop and contemplate a masterpiece of painting, or a great musical performance. If we have music on in the background while we're doing something that demands our practical attention, we can't properly pay attention to the music. It's more like mood-music rather than a truly aesthetic patterning of our experience. We can't enter fully into that aesthetic experience if we're instrumentalizing our experiences also for the sake of pragmatic purposes.

This would also be true of what we talked about in the previous class on the Dramatic Pattern of Experience, particularly if we're in a fairly complicated interpersonal situation where we're trying to negotiate some difficulty, resolve some conflict, persuade somebody to do something that we want them to do, or to make up our minds as to whether we're going to allow ourselves to be persuaded by somebody else's exhortations. If we're doing that, we can't just contemplate the experiences in what Lonergan is referring to as a pure pattern. We're instrumentalizing our experiences for the sake of the interests and concerns that are guiding those other Patterns of Experience.

The other Pattern of Experience — [the second one](#) — that Lonergan refers to as *alien*, that instrumentalizes our experience is *the intellectual, or if you like, the scientific-explanatory pattern of experience*.

A number of years ago there was a Public Broadcasting Special on astronomers; and part of it had to do with the way in which astronomers think about religious questions. And this particular team had a project: they were out at the Wilson Observatory, and they were looking, I think, at ring clusters of stars. And a journalist asked them:

“Well, do you ever, as you're doing this, do you ever get struck with the wonder, the grandeur, and the magnitude of the universe?”

And their response was:

“No! We've only got two hours of time on this telescope! We had to put in for a grant! We had to apply for the time. We've got two hours, and that's it! We've got to concentrate our attention and our experiencing on gathering the data that we need to gather to answer the scientific questions that we have.”

That's an instrumentalizing of experience!

If you stand out in the middle of a meadow and look up at the starry sky on a summer night, you are entering into an Aesthetic Pattern of Experiencing. But if your guiding interest is the asking and answering of questions to resolve a potential scientific explanation, you can't allow yourself to that kind of grandeur! You can take time out! But when you're in the patterning of experience that's the intellectual scientific exploratory patterning of experience, you're going to be distracted if you just allow yourself to contemplate the objects that you're investigating in the way that we did when we were looking at the Degas painting a few moments ago.

So Lonergan is saying that when we speak of *a pure pattern*, it means that we have to let go of those other kinds of instrumentalizing!

**The aesthetic experience and its relation to other
patterns of experience is not an 'either/or' relation.**

And one of the things about Lonergan's approach to knowledge, to the different kinds of knowledge, and to the different Patterns of Experience is — *it's not an either-or!* Part of what he wants to come out of the project of self-appropriation is for people to learn to appropriate these different Patterns of Experience, so that they can move with some flexibility and some sophistication from one to the other and back again. We'll talk about that in a few moments.

So it's not a matter of saying that the Aesthetic Pattern of Experience is *better* than those others; although certainly people have said that; and certainly some of the extra-scientific opinions that have come with the advent of modern science have led to an elevation of the Scientific Patterning of Experience, or let's say, to a certain way of thinking about the Scientific Patterning of Experience that elevated that above all others, to the extent where other mentions of our patterning of our experience have been diminished, and devaluated, and atrophied, to the point where people doubt whether or not we have a full humanity.

Lonergan's approach is not to elevate one or the other, but simply to allow us to appropriate them, and then come to understand where their limits are, and what happens if we try to use one Pattern of Experience, or one kind of knowing, in an area where it is not appropriate.

And at this point, he is simply making the remark about the instrumentalizing of the other patterns, the alien Patterns of Experience, for the sake of helping us to recognize the distinctiveness and the difference — that this continuous difference between the Aesthetic Patterning of Experience and Pragmatic or Scientific or Biological or other Patterns of Experiencing.

The word “pattern” points to the importance of
internal relations among the experiences.

The primacy of internal relations (among the colours, tones, etc) over external relations (representational art).

Representational relations are not the primary sources of the meaning of aesthetic experiences.

Aristotle’s comparison of a well-lived human life to a work of art: no element can be added or subtracted from a masterpiece or a virtuoso performance.

Example of the chair in Degas’ painting and its role in the internal relations in the painting — what happens if even something minimal is removed from a masterpiece.

Art & the Patterning of Experience

“The form [of Art] is not conceptual. It is the pattern of *internal relations* that will be immanent in the colours, in the tones, in the spaces.” (*Topics*, 219, italics added).

In focussing on the word ‘pattern’ here, Lonergan is going to refer us to something very important about our Aesthetic Patterning of Experience, namely that it is a pattern of *internal relations*. We saw this a little bit in the previous class, when we took that very strange definition that Lonergan has, that what is meant by a Pattern of Experience is *the formulation of an insight*: and the insight, you will recall, was an insight that answers the question: What is all this stuff flowing through my consciousness? Why is it these contents, and in these sequences, **that are** there in my consciousness, and not other contents that could have been **in** my consciousness? And that the answer to that is to talk about the relations of those internal contents of my experiencing to one another, moving in the direction of saying: for the sake of what? Why are these contents in their relations the ones that are flowing through my consciousness? And as Lonergan says, it’s our interest and concerns that determine that.

Well, in talking about the Aesthetic Pattern of Experience, he’s also focussing on the “**internal relations**” that will be, as he says, “**immanent in the colours, in the tones, in the spaces.**” (*Topics in Education*, p. 219). Hopefully, you already had a little bit of experience with that in contemplating the Degas painting. Letting your eyes do the exploring, and letting go of your pragmatic concerns or your interpersonal concerns, and just letting the painting itself be your guide, means, that you’re noticing how one set of shapes and colours draws you to another set of shapes and colours, and draws you back again. That’s what Lonergan means by “internal relations” of the colours. In music, it will be the same thing but with the tones, with the pitches, the timbres, the dynamics, and so on. And likewise in sculpture, in architecture, in theatre drama, it will be not only the colours and the tones, but also the shapes and their dynamic shifting, as movement takes place.

And Lonergan goes on to say:

There may be as well an external relation; the work of art may be representative; but that is not the point to attend to. (*Topics in Education*, p. 211).

Art & the Patterning of Experience

“The form [of Art] is not conceptual. It is the pattern of *internal relations* that will be immanent in the colours, in the tones, in the spaces.” (*Topics*, 219, italics added).

“There may as well be *external relations*; the work of art may be representative; but that is not the point to attend to.” (*Topics*, 211).

This is an example. This is a drawing that one of my sons did quite a number of years ago. You can see there’s a kind of a budding proto-Platonist here, about reality and what’s not real.

Toy Car & Real Car Ya

So when Lonergan says that **“There may be ... external relations”** (*Topics in Education*, p. 211), he means something like this: that there’s a correspondence between, say, the propeller on the front of that car in the imagination, and the propeller on the car in — the toy car that’s in front of the little boy here. That’s what [Lonergan](#) means by **“external relations:”** that’s what people usually mean by representation, or art as representation.

People tend to think that the most perfect representations are photographs, because you get an exact one-to-one correspondence between the points of colour on the object as it really is seen, and the points of colour on the photograph as it has been taken. Of course, people who are familiar with photography as an art-form know that there is a great deal of

composition that goes into photography; and that it isn't a simple matter of a passive receiving of one-to-one correspondences.

So when Lonergan talks about the fact that in art there may also be external relations, what he means is that what people usually think art is about, or what people often think is what makes for good art versus bad art: they look at a painting and say "That doesn't look like an apple!" "That doesn't look like a woman!" "That doesn't look like a sunset *to me!*" And so I don't think it's really good art!" *Lonergan's point is that the representational-ness is really not what the significant dynamics or the significant components of a work of art are! It is rather, as he says, internal relations!* Or in this case, it's the little boy's imagination: it's the relationship between the two propellers on the imagined [car](#) and the real car.

And so just as we were looking at the Degas painting, we weren't paying attention to the relations between *the points of colour and the shapes on the slide* and *actual human figures standing in a room* to which those colours may or may not correspond with considerable accuracy. That's not Degas's point! *Degas's point is the internal relations in that painting itself.*

So let us return to it for a moment.

Degas, *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera.*

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

And in a masterpiece of painting, a masterpiece of music, a masterpiece of drama, it is said — in a way that Aristotle suggests in the *Nicomachean Ethics* — that the good life, an excellent life, a life of *Arete* as Aristotle puts it, is *a life in which you couldn't add or subtract anything and make it better.* And he actually uses two examples of the sculptor and the harpist and the flutist in illustration of what he means by *the balance that is characteristic of a human life well-lived.* And again, *in a masterpiece, you can't add or subtract anything that will make it better.* That in a virtuoso performance — which is where we get the Latin that has the same Latin root as the translation of *Arete*: 'virtue' is the translation of *Arete* — we speak of a virtuoso performance in music or in dance or in drama. Virtuosity consists in having just the right amount of just the right things in performance; and *so also in a painting, he would say [that](#) you can't add or subtract anything, and make it better!*

And so what I've done is to artificially remove the chair.

Degas, *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera*
without the chair

This after all is a painting about the tensions of human living, the tensions of expectation, and desire for approval, and desire for succeeding in virtuoso performance on the part of the ballerina, and being stopped in the midst of all those tensions that are part and parcel of this huge scene.

And so you would say that: *What difference does that chair make?* That chair is just a chair; it's not very important to the composition of this painting; it's not very — it doesn't play a particularly important role in the human drama!

And yet, what happens when you take that chair off? Just notice some of the things that happen! Among other things, the girl is more isolated than she was before. ... And there's a way in which that chair plays a kind of mediating role in the tension. It's expressed through the various shapes and volumes and colours in this painting.

And when we put the chair back in, notice how *the feel of the painting changes*.

Degas, *The Rehearsal in the Foyer of the Opera*.

So *the chair plays a role in the internal relations of the painting*. Degas has not put that chair there just because it was in the room. The chair is there, and painted in the way that it is painted, because Degas wanted it to be painted that way. It's *possible* that he put a chair in the scene, and had these people posing. It's likely that he probably did do that. But for whatever reasons, he put the chair with the colours, with the shapes, with the fan, with the white handkerchief or whatever that is, that reflects the colours of the dresses of the ballerinas; he put it there to be part of the modulating² of the internal relations of this painting.

² This word as heard sounds like 'moduling' which could be read as modelling or modulating. Perhaps both?

The aesthetic patterning of experiencing is something that has to be learned. One has to learn how to let oneself participate in and enter into the internal relations of a work of art, to enter into the space of the painting.

Slide of Piet Mondrian's painting

Landscape with Farmhouse (circa 1906).

This is somewhat representational, but it is not a very good representation; but that is Mondrian's point. He is drawing us into a world of colour and shape and association and their relations *in* the space of the painting.

The development of Mondrian's abstract style as an exploration of the rhythms of the landscape; note the elimination of external relations and the exploration of internal relations.

Piet Mondrian, *Landscape with Farmhouse*
(circa 1906).

So there's a sense in which the internal relations are very important, in every painting! *There's a sense in which you could say that all painting is abstract art!* People who encounter abstract art for the first time find themselves lost and bewildered. And I think that being lost and bewildered is a matter of having yet to learn how to enter into the internal relations of colours and shapes of the painting, to enter into the space that's being made available *for seeing* by the painter in the way that the painter has composed the painting, with these strokes and colours and intensities, and so on.

This is a painting by Piet Mondrian (1872-1944). It's called *Landscape with Farmhouse*, painted around 1906. And you could say **that** it's representational. We recognize in this, things that look like trees, things that look like houses; you could say, we might figure it out that this is probably a farmhouse **that the painter has focussed on** [uncertain reading]. We see things that look like a pond; and there's a stream; you see that it's possibly intermingled with some ice in that pond there. The trees seem not to have any leaves on them. The skies look like maybe they're winter skies.

You could say that this is representational, but it's not a very good representation. It's not a very true or exact or precise representation. And that of course isn't Mondrian's point. What Mondrian is doing here is drawing us into a world of colour and shape and association that has its own rhythms, and its own texture, and its own contours, and its own rhythms and feelings.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

And again, it's the relatedness of these things to one another. The reflection below gives us a symmetry that runs down the middle, the horizontal middle of the painting. And yet that symmetry is interrupted by this large grey shape on the right. And Mondrian, you'll notice, has deliberately refrained from using certain colours. There's no bright reds; there's no total greens in there. He's deliberately picked a certain range of colours, and he's letting us explore the same relationships among those colours and those shapes.

Now Mondrian developed his style of painting over a period of about twenty or thirty years.

Piet Mondrian, *Horizontal Tree*,
(1911)

And this is a painting of about a decade later: This is called "*Horizontal Tree*", and it's actually five years later, from 1911. I think you'll recognize some of the style of the trees that we just saw in the scene of the *Landscape with Farmhouse*. He gets a very different set of rhythms, the colours are different; and he's figured out a whole new of representing the rhythms that are the rhythms of the tree in relationship — in the relationships, the internal relationships, among colours and shapes and strokes.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

And you can see that there's a brokenness to what would be sort of the background sky and the underlying ground; and yet that brokenness has a certain rhythmic-ness to it. The rectangle or square-like shapes that permeate this painting are complemented by, and complement, the rhythms of what are the remnants of representations of the branches and twigs of the tree.

Guided contemplation of Mondrian's geometric painting reveals its underlying biological forms and rhythms.

We have to take time to enter into and participate in the biological rhythms in the painting.

By 1936, Mondrian is painting like this:

Piet Mondrian, *Rhythm of Straight Lines*
(1935–42)

He's still exploring the rhythms. There are the rhythms of trees and the rhythms of sky, and ground, and the relationship to trees; but now he's doing it in a pure form, in which the relationships are almost entirely internal, with no remnants left of the external relations. And yet if we go back to this painting,

Piet Mondrian, *Horizontal Tree*,
(1911)

we can see that some of those rhythms and those internal relations are already present in this, this painting that's abstract but still reminds us of a tree.

And this Mondrian painting ...

Piet Mondrian, *Rhythm of Straight Lines*
(1935–42)

I would ask you to — I would encourage you to pause again with this painting, and allow your eyes to explore *it*.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

And you could just notice things ... And you could notice in particular where there are some irregularities; that little red rectangle off to the right: it replicates the blue rectangle up on the left corner, in shape, but not in colour. And notice also that, unlike all the other shapes on the far right column, the one that has the red rectangle in it is broken up. The rest of them are all uninterrupted, they're all white. That sets a tension in the rhythms of what would be otherwise a monotonous repetition.

Mondrian's paintings are paintings of biological form, even though their biological form is not something that we immediately recognise. ... There are organic rhythms in this painting. ... But we have to take time to allow ourselves to enter into those biological rhythms and participate in them.

Let me just — in case it's not obvious — the blue borders to the left and the right are backgrounds that come from the slide. They are not part of the painting themselves.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

Loneragan's view of "art as feeling recollected in tranquillity" (borrowed from Wordsworth).

Aesthetic patterning is something we *do*. It is a kind of mediated, active passivity which needs to be *learned and developed*.

Aesthetic associations are those intrinsic to the patterns, not extrinsic.

But the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic itself needs to be learned. For example, a viewer may bring in personal, or historical or psychoanalytic associations in her or his viewing.

These may be mere projections extrinsic to the artwork; but they could be intrinsic. What are those elements doing *in* the painting?

We need to learn how to enter into an art work, and let it be our guide, and not impose preconceived ideas on our viewing.

Only way to do this is to spend lots of time entering into the aesthetic pattern of experience, and to let the other patternings fade away.

Art & the Patterning of Experience

"Poetry, according to Wordsworth, is emotion recollected in tranquillity" (*Topics*, 218).

Art is feeling recollected in tranquillity.

Another thing that comes from Lonergan's *Topics in Education* reflections on Art is his respect for Wordsworth's comment that poetry is "emotion recollected in tranquillity" (*Topics*, p. 218). Or to say it more generally, that "Art is feeling recollected in tranquillity." Now, the words 'emotion' and 'feeling' have many, many, different meanings. Later on in Lonergan's own work, he will use the word 'feeling,' and talk about its importance in the areas particularly of ethics and of religion, and so on. I'm using the word 'feeling' here; 'emotion' can mean different kinds of things. For the moment, let's just say that

Art is feeling recollected in tranquillity.

Piet Mondrian, *Rhythm of Straight Lines*
(1935–42)

In order to enter into and participate in this painting, we have to enter into a state of tranquillity; to let ourselves experience this interplay of shapes and colours in an atmosphere of tranquillity; to let ourselves be open to what it is going to say to us.

The Meaning of Art

"The work is an invitation to participate."

(Topics in Education, p. 219)

Aesthetic participation is a *patterning* of experience.

Just as the patterning of scientific observation must be learned and practiced,

So also the patterning of aesthetic participation must be learned and practiced.

And this is something I've learned over a number of years of teaching this section of Lonergan's works in classes: that many undergraduate and graduate students have not really had much of an opportunity to learn to develop the aesthetic patterning of experience.

Aesthetic participation is a patterning of experience; it's something we do. There is a passivity to it, and that's part of what Lonergan is getting at when he quotes Wordsworth using the word 'tranquillity.' There is a *kind* of passivity in aesthetic patterning, in aesthetic participation. *But it's not absolute passivity! Aesthetic patterning of experience is something we actually do.* It's, if you like, a kind of *mediated passivity*, or an *active passivity*. People actually have to learn to be able to appreciate art. And *art appreciation consists primarily in being able to let go of everything else, and enter into the work of art — whether it's a painting, or musical composition, or a play, or a movie, or a sculpture, or a dance, or a drama, or a piece of poetry, or a novel — to be able to enter into it and let it be our guide.*

Now, there are going to be associations. For example, when we were looking at the Mondrian painting, I suggested that even the last, the most abstract, rectangular composition, has organic rhythms to it. And when we were looking at the Degas painting of the ballet rehearsal, we were making associations; we most of us have seen ballerinas, and women dressed in ballet costumes; and we were able to make an association that the man in the white suit was probably the teacher or the director or the master. So we bring some associations!

The tricky thing about learning to aesthetically participate, to aesthetically pattern, is learning how to let the associations be intrinsic to the internal patterns, and not extrinsic. I remember one time I was giving an example of a painting in class, and we were talking about it; and one of the students in the class said: "I think that person in the painting is bored!" What was clear was that the student was bored. I don't think there was any boredom in the painting that we were looking at at the time. That would be an association, but it's an association that's not connected to the internal rhythm of the colours and the shapes. People also can bring, sort of, let's say, psychoanalytic and intrusive associations, saying: "Well, this is really a phallic symbol," for example. Well, maybe it's a phallic symbol and maybe it's not, but *what is it doing in the painting*, as opposed to identifying and connecting it with something outside. People can say: "Well, the reason why this is being painted is because it's the product of the bourgeois class of the seventeenth century and that kind of society!" Well, that may be true, but that doesn't exhaust the full meaningfulness that is part and parcel of the internal relations.

So there are ways in which people can make associations with what they're seeing in painting and hearing in music; and those associations may be intrinsically related as part of the internal relations, but they may also be distracting. And so people have to learn how to let their experiencing be guided by the work of art itself, and not to impose upon it preconceived ideas, preconceived theories, preconceived associations; or for that matter, their own kind of personal idiosyncratic associations.

The Aesthetic Pattern of Experience has to be practiced and learned! Just as a scientific observer, like a Barbara McClintock, or a Henrietta Swan, or an Edwin Hubble, have to learn how to recognize in the experiences that they're having the things of scientific import, so also, people have to learn, have to train themselves, to enter into the Aesthetic Patterning of Experience.

And to some extent that's really what we're trying to do in this particular class: is to try to learn how to develop abilities in the Aesthetic Patterning of Experience. Of course, the only way to really do this is to spend lots of time, either with works of music, or works of painting, and to do so in a way in which the distractions of various kinds, those alien patterns, are allowed to fade, so that one enters more fully into just the experiential — what Lonergan calls the pure experiential patterning (see *Topics*, pp. 211 and 213).

Slide of August Renoir's portrait entitled
Madame Renoir (1884).

Practice in “feeling recollected in tranquillity.”

Discussion of noticing the visual elements and the
associations inspired by the painting.

The significance of the hat being associated with halos
in other paintings — *not* an extrinsic association.

Interplays of colour and shape shared among paintings
across history. Paintings as situated in the history of
art.

What place is this painting? Not in ordinary space,
not extrinsically related to “real” Space.

Renoir,
Madame Renoir
(1884)

This is another painting, a favourite of mine, by Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919). It's of his wife; it's entitled simply, "**Madame Renoir**", painted in 1884. And I invite you to let yourself explore this painting as well.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

You might want to put your browser on pause, to spend some time with this painting.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

And this is an example of "feeling recollected in tranquillity." When we've done this in class the students will notice that there's just a great deal of *ordinariness* in this painting. Madame Renoir has on her gardening jacket, and her gardening hat. It's a very, very, simple plain down-to-earth composition. Her hands are large, or her hand is large, and her body is a large body. It's not a runway³ fashion model body. Notice how everything is just a little out of kilter: the button — her jacket looks almost like it has a missed button; the collar angles are just — seem to be a little bit off. Notice how the colours in the jacket play with the colours in the background, the sky background with the colours in the hat. Notice also how the colours of the flowers are resonating with the colours in her face. And try for a moment, just to cover over in front of your eyes the flowers; and notice what happens to the painting. You take your hand away and let those flowers come back, and notice how it changes.

Inevitably, some student in the class says: "The hat looks like a halo!" And that I think is not an extrinsic association. I think that's an intrinsic association. *I think, Renoir, very much, is showing the way in which, with his eyes of love, he sees his wife with the spark of the eternal, the spark of the holy, the spark of the sacred, in her.*

³ This word puzzled the present transcriber at first, as the term 'runway' is only used in Ireland and the UK to refer to the take-off or landing strip for aeroplanes. The track upon which models parade their fashions is called a 'catwalk' over here.

And painters do, of course, as all artists of every medium do, draw upon the traditions of their predecessors. And students say: “Well, I think Renoir’s kind of borrowed or stolen or copied a trick from an earlier era of painting, in which there were paintings which were of saints, with halos around their heads.” And I asked the students: “Well, why do you think the Medieval and Renaissance painters painted halos around people’s heads?” And *it is precisely the kind of interplay of colour and shape, and the way in which faces are given a new kind of contrast by the halo-like background. And Renoir is doing that! He’s showing the holiness in his wife, in the love that he has for his wife, in all her ordinariness! There we have a frumpy gardening jacket: there is something beaming through there, that is transcending anything earthly: so in the earthly is the immanence of the transcendence!! And he’s using that technique of a halo, but using it now transplanted into the ordinariness of this straw hat.*

I asked the students: “Where is this painting? What space is this? What place is this painting?” And what we discover, of course, is that Renoir has deliberately eliminated any ordinary associations, which is to say any *external relations* that would allow us to place Madame Renoir *in* any place in particular. There’s no buildings, there’s not even any trees that we might recognize, or streams, or hills, or background landscapes. So Renoir is showing this by using *this association-less, this internal combinations of patterns of colour and shape, to communicate the purely experiential pattern of what is seen when one recollects in tranquillity the feelings that are the feelings that he has in his beholding of his wife on this occasion.*

**The Elemental Meaning and Ulterior Significance of
Art.**

**Elemental meaning of a painting transcends words
about the painting.**

Elemental meaning only accessible by participating.

**Artworks open up the world’s majesty, goodness and
adventure in very concrete ways.**

Elemental and Ulterior Meaning

“**[Art] has meaning but the meaning is elemental**” (*Topics*, 215).

“**It is an openness to the world, to adventure, to greatness, to goodness, to majesty.**” (*Topics*, 214).

And as Lonergan says: Art has “**meaning, but the meaning is elemental.**” (*CWL 10, Topics in Education*, p. 215). To go back [Pat returns to the **Madame Renoir painting**], what’s the meaning of that painting? And I’ve given some words to it, and I’ve suggested *some transcendent meaning as part of what this painting is about*. And I wouldn’t pretend that every painting has transcendent meaning. I think Renoir has intended to and successfully communicated transcendence in what is here in this painting. [Pat returns to the slide above.] That’s part of what Lonergan is getting at by this ‘**elemental**’ meaning. My words are only suggestive; they certainly don’t exhaust all the meaning in that painting. That elemental meaning is a meaning of “**openness to the world, to adventure, to greatness, to goodness, to majesty.**” (*CWL 10, Topics in Education*, p. 214). And it’s not just openness in general, adventure in general, greatness in general, goodness or majesty in general. It’s this particular adventure, this particular greatness, this particular form of goodness, this particular instance of majesty that the painter is doing. All painting is very concrete! There’s no two paintings that give us the same sense of grandeur, or the same sense of greatness, or the same adventure.

And the only way to gather the elemental meaning of a work of art is to participate in the invitation into that world, into that adventure, into that greatness, that it opens up for us.

Georgia O'Keefe's ***Oriental Poppies*** (1928).

Meaning as beyond words, as elemental.

Prior to formulating insights, there is an elemental
unity of the *subject* in act with the *object* in act.

A painting needs the participation of human viewers to
become an aesthetic entity.

The elemental meaning is our discovery of ourselves
as aesthetically patterning.

“Subject in act, emergent, ecstatic, standing out.”

Prior to freedom of choice is the freedom to pattern
our own experience, to transcend mere biological
determinism.

Opens up to us the ways that we can be aesthetically
alive and creative.

Georgia O'Keefe,
Oriental Poppies
(1928)

This is a painting by Georgia O'Keefe called **Oriental Poppies**, painted in 1928.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

We say, what's the meaning of that painting? It's not a meaning that we can put in words. If it could be put in words, Georgia O'Keefe would have been an author and not a painter. ... *It's a meaning that's elemental. It's a meaning that's to be appropriated only by participating in the painting itself; letting it invite us into the world, the greatness, the adventure that it opens up!*

And again, I invite you to put your browser on pause, and spend some time with this marvellous painting.

Short time allowed for further contemplation of this work of art

Elemental and Ulterior Meaning

“The subject in act is the object in act on the level of elemental meaning.” (*Topics*, 217).

“Subject in act is just himself or herself — subject in act, emergent, ecstatic, standing out. Subject is its own originating freedom.” (*Topics*, 217).

“Artists constantly talk about the picture’s being ‘alive’

— even things that have no life at all like a stone.

What is alive is the perceiving ... you are coming to life” (*Topics*, 224)

Lonergan goes on to say that **“the subject in act is the object in act on the level of elemental meaning.”** (*CWL* 10, p. 217). He was a great fan of Aristotle’s remark in the *De Anima* that **“sense in act is the sensible in act; and intelligence in act is the intelligible in act”** (*CWL* 10, p. 224). That prior to the distinctions that come about through formulating our insights, there is an identity, and unity, of what is understood and what is understanding. And we’ll talk about this more in a couple of classes hence, when we talk about objectivity, and how Lonergan understands the problematic of objectivity. But *objectivity for Lonergan is a differentiation within a unity, a prior unity, so that there is an elemental union of subject in act and object in act.*

One could say what's the elemental meaning of a painting? It's you or I! The elemental meaning of a painting is you or I as we participate in it. A painting in a room with no people is not an aesthetic entity. A painting becomes an aesthetic entity only insofar as there is a relationship between it and human beings who are entering into it and participating in an aesthetic patterning of experience.

And as Lonergan says, one of the things that happens in that is: *it's not just a painting that is revealed, but the subject who is participating in the invitation that that painting offers in the particular way that it's inviting us to explore it. That is the meaning!* What we discover through the painting in the aesthetic pattern of experience is profoundly *ourselves as aesthetically patterning. We are subjects in act, emerging, ecstatic, standing out in our most elemental form of freedom!* The subject in act is just himself or herself — **“subject in act, emergent, ecstatic, standing out. Subject is its own originating freedom.”** (CWL 10, *Topics in Education*, p. 217).

And later on in the class, or later on in the second semester, we'll be talking about Lonergan's account of freedom, and his account of freedom of choice. But *before there is freedom of choice, there is a more originary, and a more fundamental, and a more elemental, kind of freedom: and it's the freedom of us to be the participants, to be the patterners of our experiences; to not be determined by any instrumental pattern, but to just discover that we, as human beings, are capable of arising above pure biological determinisms, and arising even above our capacity to biologically pattern our biological experiences; that we have the capacity to transcend the merely biological patterning and the merely biological determinism, and that our experiencing, our being conscious, our being awake and alive, and fully sensing, is itself a profound moment, and a profound element, in our self-transcendence as human beings. And a painting: that opens up to us the various ways in which we can be aesthetically alive, in which we can be aesthetically true.*

The aliveness of paintings arises from our participation.

**Paul Cézanne's *Rocks: Forest of Fontainebleau*
(1894-98)**

its trees and stones are “alive.”

Time allotted for contemplation.

“Artists talk constantly about the picture’s being alive!” (CWL 10, p. 224). Even things that have no life, like a stone. What is alive is the perceiving. *You are coming to life! The life of a painting is us as participating with that painting in an aesthetic patterning.* And so I’ve deliberately chosen a painting: it’s a painting by Cézanne; it’s called “**Rocks: Forest of Fontainebleau.**” And I deliberately chose it because, just as Lonergan says, it’s a painting that doesn’t have anything alive in it; it’s primarily stones, there are a few trees in it, but primarily it’s a painting of a stone. And you will see, hopefully, what Lonergan is getting at about this painting being alive, even though there’s no living beings in it.

Rocks: Forest of Fontainebleau

Paul Cézanne

Short time allowed for further contemplation of this work of art

And just notice again that as you let yourself explore the internal relations of the shapes and colours of these rock formations, just notice how — what comes to your attention, and the feelings that are the naturally associated feelings that you have in connection with allowing yourself to explore this painting, with your eyes.

Again, you might want to put your “Echo 360” on pause, so you can explore that more fully.

Short time allowed for further contemplation of this work of art

Elemental meaning and ulterior significance: Why does Lonergan situate the aesthetic pattern second after the biological pattern in *Insight*?

Humans are capable the liberation from using experiencing merely to survive, toward freely patterning experience in the aesthetic mode, to focus on beauty rather than survival.

In Chapter 6 of *Insight*, Lonergan suggests art's ability to put us in touch with our elemental wonder — something he explores more systematically in Chapter 12.

Artistic experience is companioned by intellectual inquiry in its pure unrestrictedness.

Scientific inquiry is heuristic, guided; practical commonsense inquiry is restricted; in aesthetic patterning, we encounter our wondering in all its infinity and unrestrictedness.

Letting our experiencing and wonder take us where it will.

Elemental and Ulterior Meaning

“One is led to acknowledge that experience can occur for the sake of experiencing, that it can slip beyond the confines of serious-minded biological purpose, and that this very liberation is a spontaneous, self-justifying joy.”

(CWL 3, 207-208).

Now, this is reverting back to some of the passages, some of the things that Lonergan says in *Insight* when he's talking about the Aesthetic Pattern of Experiencing, that echo the things that we've already seen from the context of *Topics in Education*.

“One is led to acknowledge that experience can occur for the sake of experiencing, ...” (*CWL 3*, pp. 207-208). So here is — This is what he means by the *pure experience*; that the other patterns, the intellectual, the biological, and the dramatic, and the practical, that those are then let go of **“that it can slip beyond the confines of serious-**

minded biological purpose, and that this very liberation is a spontaneous, self-justifying joy.” (CWL 3, p. 208). Discovering oneself as a being which has the capacity to transcend the merely biological is part of what Lonergan understands by the Aesthetic Pattern of Experience.

Last class when I was talking about the order in which Lonergan treated the Patternings of Experience, I mentioned that there is a strategy in its presentation. But since we skipped over the Aesthetic and the Artistic Patterns of Experience in the last class, we’ve missed this point.

Why does Lonergan take the Aesthetic Pattern of Experiencing second, after the Biological? Because of this liberation from what you might call the drudge of living just to survive!

What Lonergan is saying here is that in the Aesthetic Patterning of Experience, we discover ourselves as being able to live, not just to survive, but to have this what he calls the “**spontaneous, self-justifying joy**” (CWL 3, p. 208), the ecstasy of discovering oneself as capable of patterning one’s experience in a way that’s not dictated by the necessities of biological survival. But then of course he goes on: the next one that he takes up after this is the Intellectual Pattern of Experience. And quite often to leave the Intellectual Patterning of Experience for the Aesthetic Pattern of Experience is equally liberating! Sometimes “all work and no play” in the intellectual field as well, can be less than — can feel less than whole, and less than liberating!

Elemental and Ulterior Meaning

“Prior to the neatly formulated questions of systematizing intelligence, there is the deep-set wonder in which all questions have their source and ground.” (CWL 3, p. 208).

Now, in *Insight*, Lonergan is going to suggest something which he hasn’t really fully developed the framework — that he will develop later on, particularly in Chapter Twelve — about *what it is that Art is about*.

And what it is that Art is about, as he's presenting it at least in *Insight*, is *it puts us into contact with something that companions our elemental aesthetic liberation*: namely, as we let go of the instrumentalizing of our experiencing, whether by pragmatic, practical, interpersonal, scientific, explanatory, scholarly, philosophical — those kinds of patternings of our experience, that we're using our experience for the sake of those goals of understanding — *that is we let go of those patternings, and enter into what he calls the purely experiential patternings of aesthetic experiences, that what remains is the elemental wonder of pure unrestricted desire to know. The pure unrestrictedness of our intellectual wonder is there along with our elemental experiencing of — in paintings and in music and in sculptures and in dance and in dramas.*

He's mentioned the "pure question" a couple of times in earlier chapters in *Insight* (see, e.g., *CWL* 3, p. 34). And *here what he is saying is that our experience of the purity, the unrestrictedness, the unlimitedness, the infinity of our inquiry — that that emerges as we let our experiencing be guided by just what's presented to our sight, or to our hearing, or to our bodily motion. To the extent that we just let ourselves be guided by what we see, and by what we hear, the instrumentalizing of our inquiry will be let go of, but not our inquiry; not the pureness, not the unrestrictedness of our inquiry, not the infinity of our inquiry — That will remain!*

So recall we were looking at the earlier chapters on scientific method that we instrumentalize — although Lonergan doesn't use the term at that time — we *instrumentalize* our inquiry into either a classical or a statistical heuristic structure. If we're enquiring classically, we're not asking all possible questions; when we enquire statistically, we're not asking all possible questions! *Heuristic scientific methods are guided inquiry, which is to say that they are instrumentalized for the sake of certain kinds of outcomes.* Wonderful and good outcomes! Great scientific ecstatic discoveries! But nevertheless, not unrestricted! Likewise, when we move into the intellectual patterning of common sense, practical common sense, practical patterning of our experiencing, or interpersonal patterning of our experiencing, *we're not in the throes of the unrestrictedness of our inquiry!*

And so what Lonergan is saying here is that *in the real aesthetic experiencing, along with the experiencing of the sights, and the sounds, and the rhythms, and where they lead, and the proper associations, there — in the best of aesthetic experiencing — there always present is the marvelousness of the infinity of wonder!* So comparable to what he talks about as “**ulterior significance**” (CWL 10, pp. 221-222) “**elemental meaning**”, in *Topics in Education* (see indeed the whole section CWL 10, pp. 214-222) is that elemental wonder and “Aw, it's sweet!, which we experience when all the instrumentalizations of our experiencing are abandoned for the sake of letting our experiencing take us where it will.

Wassily Kandinsky's ***Black Lines #1 B9*** (1913).

Discussion of the kinetic (motion) qualities of the painting — the motion of course is *us*.

What sounds would naturally accompany this play of shapes and colours?

Black Lines #1 B9

1913

Wassily Kandinsky

This is a painting by Wassily Kandinsky, called **Black Lines #1 B9** [Black Lines number one B nine], painted in nineteen thirteen.

Short time allowed for further contemplation of this work of art

And there are, no doubt, some associations that you may have of certain figures in here. But just allow yourself to explore the play, and indeed the clash, of colours here. *Perhaps more than any other painting we've viewed so far, this is a kinetic painting. There is motion in this painting. And the motion of course is us!* ... You might even ask yourself what kinds of sounds would naturally, and appropriately, companion this play of colour, to get a feel for the rhythms of what Kandinsky is doing in this painting.

Short time again allowed for further contemplation of this work of art

Ulterior significance — the painting and indeed the visible world as sign and cipher of something transcendent — something unnamed, encountered only by participating.

Elemental and Ulterior Meaning

Ulterior Significance: “Art ... *presents* the beauty, the splendour, the glory, the majesty, the ‘plus’ that is in things The splendour of the world is a cipher, a revelation, an unveiling, the presence of one who is not seen.” (CWL 10: *Topics in Education*, p. 222).

And with regard to the *elemental meaning*, Lonergan uses also this phrase, “*ulterior significance.*” “Art ... *presents* the beauty, the splendour, the glory, the majesty, the *plus* ... in things. ... The splendour of the world is a cipher, a revelation, an unveiling, the presence of one who is not seen.” (CWL 10: *Topics in Education*, p. 222).

Black Lines #1 B9

1913

Wassily Kandinsky

Short time again allowed for further contemplation of this work of art

There is a presence in this interplay of colour. We can say “it’s behind”, but *behind is a metaphor*; behind this, if you’re looking at this **on a** computer, is a bunch of wires and solid state modules. Behind this in the classroom in which I’m standing right now is a blackboard. So if we say that there is something behind this, it has *an ulterior significance*; we’re talking metaphorically. It’s not a literal ‘behindness’! *It is in the seeing of this colourful pattern of internal relations that there is more than the internal relations. There is something that transcends the internal relations. And it’s what Lonergan is getting at by this remark about “ulterior significance.”*

El Greco’s *View of Toledo* (1597).

A painting of a city, but communicates more than a city. Forces carrying the city like a ship on the sea.

The implied, invisible presences of the painting as part of its ulterior significance.

View of Toledo

1597

El Greco

Short time again allowed for further contemplation of this work of art

And this is El Greco’s **View of Toledo** (1597). It’s a painting of a city, and yet the shapes and colours are chosen in such a way as to communicate more than a city. Notice, among other things, how this almost seems to be a massive ship in a stormy sea! Look,

there's something alive in this painting! There is someone not seen, in the buildings, in the trees, in the hills, in the bridges, in the streams, in what looks to be, possibly, a sepulchre off to the left, almost slightly to the left of centre in the painting. All that is seen, and yet there's an ulterior significance, a life that's being communicated through the concrete actual visual experiences.

Art as a “withdrawal for a return.”

We withdraw into aesthetic experience so as to return to a fuller actuation, an enriched, concrete dramatic pattern of experience.

The mistake of the aesthete: failing to allow living to be transformed by time spent experiencing in the aesthetic pattern.

Art criticism as a further withdrawal for another return: return to the aesthetic pattern with enriched capacity for noticing and participating.

This class has oscillated between aesthetic experiencing and the withdrawal into philosophical reflections, so as to return to the aesthetic pattern.

The achievement of the good art critic/historian/philosopher: enrich aesthetic patterning so as to then enrich our living out of our part in the drama of human history.

Now Lonergan also says that art is “**a withdrawal for a return**” (*CWL 10: Topics in Education*, pp. 208 and 217). “**Any type of differentiation of consciousness,**” whether it’s artistic, or scientific, or interpersonal, or scholarly, or religious, or prayerful, is

“a withdrawal for a return. It is a withdrawal from total activity, total actuation, for the sake of fuller actuation when one returns.” (*CWL 10: Topics in Education*, p. 209).

One returns to “**ordinary living and its concrete potentialities.**” (*CWL 10: Topics in Education*, p. 208).

Aesthetic and Dramatic Patterns

Art is “a withdrawal for a return.” (*CWL 10: Topics in Education*, pp. 208 and 217).

“Any type of differentiation of consciousness ... is simply a withdrawal for a return ... It is a withdrawal from total activity, total actuation, for the sake of a fuller actuation when one returns. (*CWL 10: Topics in Education*, p. 209).

One returns to “ordinary living in its concrete potentialities.” (*CWL 10: Topics in Education*, p. 208).

So there is *an intrinsic meaning, an intrinsic value, an intrinsic worth*, to painting, to music, to drama, to sculpture! And those intrinsic worths and intrinsic values are to be had only by letting go of the other patterns of experiencing, and allowing oneself to be formed into the capacities for purely aesthetic experiencing. And yet we don’t spend all of our time in the concert hall, or in the theatre, or in the museum. We spend *some time* there, and then we return to our daily tasks, and obligations, and responsibilities; and our ordinary creativities and productivenesses of our ordinary living.

So Lonergan is situating the intrinsic meaningfulness of these aesthetic patterns of experience within something larger; that the intrinsic meaningfulness also spills its meaningfulness over into ordinary living, for the sake of a fuller actuation; or what he calls *the return to ordinary living*. I referred earlier to Aristotle's comments about what it means to live a virtuous and excellent life, and that this is analogous to the aesthetic experiences of music and sculpture. He is suggesting there that to really live fully, to live an elegant and dignified, a refined, dramatic pattern of experience is dependent upon just how enriched our capacities for dramatic living in the presence of others are, by the resources that we acquired by withdrawing precisely from ordinary living for the sake of living ordinarily in a much more profound and enriched way.

Withdrawal for a Return

So you can think of it like this: that concrete living — in concrete living, we withdraw from the dramatic pattern of experiencing into an aesthetic pattern of experiencing, *for the sake of returning, for an enriched way of dramatic patterning of experiencing*. Now you can say that what differentiates this way of thinking about the meaningfulness of art, and what might be called the experiencing of an aesthete, is that an aesthete can withdraw into the aesthetic patterning of experience and then return to ordinary living as though he or she were not touched by that aesthetic experiencing.

Lonergan is suggesting that the fuller meaning of the aesthetic patterning of experiencing is when, having spent time in the aesthetic experiencing of painting, or sculpture, or drama or music, we return and treat the world around us with a deeper appreciation of *its* elemental meaning, *its* ulterior significance, and the richer possibilities of living a dignified life, playing a higher and more profound role in the drama of human living than we would have had we not spent the time in that withdrawal for a return.

To this I want to add another comment: not something that Lonergan has explicitly mentioned, but something that I think is worth referring to. *There is a double withdrawal!* Just as we can withdraw from concrete living into the aesthetic pattern of experience and develop that capacity for aesthetic participation, so also we can withdraw from the aesthetic pattern, the time we've spent looking at paintings, or attending plays, or concerts, into Art Criticism, interpretation, and Philosophy of Art. Indeed, that's what we've been doing for about the last hour in this class; is we have been oscillating back and forth between actually being involved as exploring paintings and letting them speak to us, and then doing some reflecting, philosophically, upon what it means to be involved in that patterning of experiencing.

Good Art Criticism, the best art criticism I think, helps us notice better, attend better, refine our spontaneous associations, than we have when we enter into a pattern of experience just naively. Really good Art Criticism will help us experience what's going on in the work of art. It will help us be more attentive; it will help us attend as we did when we talked about the halo of light quality of Madame Renoir's hat; it will help us attend to the meanings that are historical precedents of the painting, or the music, or the play, or the poem, meanings that are gathered in by the present work of art, and give it an enrichment, that give it a further set of internal relations, the historical associations that are immanent to a work of art, are part of its internal relations, even though they are not present here and now.

Good Art History will help us experience the pattern of the work of art in a richer way, because it gives us a historical set of internal relations. So internal relations doesn't mean just *already-out-there-now real*, in a way that we'll talk about in another couple of weeks. *Already-out-there-now realness* is a limited notion of realness, that prescind from the realness of the historical past as it is present to us and with us. Art Criticism, History of Art, Philosophy of Art, will help us to expand the appropriate and the intrinsic internal relations to include those of prior historical works of art and historical events.

And so just as we return from the aesthetic pattern of experiencing to concrete living, so also what is best when Art Criticism, interpretation, and Art History, and Philosophy of Art, are done well, they allow us, *first*, to return to *the aesthetic pattern of experiencing in an enriched and fuller way*, which, in turn, *secondly*, allows us to return to *our concrete living out the drama of human history and our place in it in a richer and fuller and more beautiful way*.

Aesthetic and Dramatic Patterns

“Not only, then, [are humans] capable of aesthetic liberations and artistic creativity, but [their] first work of art is [their] own living.

“The fair, the beautiful, the admirable is embodied by [humans in their own bodies] and actions before it is given a still freer realization in painting and sculpture, in music and poetry.”

“Such artistry is dramatic. It is in the presence of others, and others too are also actors in the primordial drama.” (*Insight*, 210-211).

We saw this **during** the last class, this remark that Lonergan has about human beings, that *the basic and fundamental and most original work of art is our own living*. And that it’s embodied by us in our actions before it’s given a still freer realization in painting, sculpture, poetry and music.

“Not only, then, is man capable of aesthetic liberation and artistic creativity, but his first work of art is his own living. The fair, the beautiful, the admirable is embodied by man in his own body and actions before it is given a still freer realization in painting and sculpture, in music and poetry.” (*CWL* 3, pp. 210-211).

Now we can see that what he means by “**a freer realization**” (CWL 3, p. 211) is that *the potentialities for human living are explored in art in ways that are not limited to the immediate concerns of pragmatic living, that are not routinized by the associations and commitments and concerns that we live in.*

The Aesthetic vs. the Artistic Patterns of Experiencing.

Aesthetic patterning is the participation in the ‘purely experiential pattern.’

Aesthetic patterning is heightened by artworks, but can also arise in response to “ordinary” natural or human scenes.

Artistic patterning actively works to find the proper ways to express the aesthetically patterned experience.

The aesthetic patterning is veiled, not-yet-unobjectified; the artistic pattern seeks insights and techniques in order to express and unfold that aesthetic patterning.

Artistic patterning “selects” from the complex mixture of sensations in order to facilitate the entry of the viewer into the aesthetic patterning opened up by her or his artistic expression.

Just as the “inner word” formulates the intelligible content of an insight, so also the artist expresses the implicit and enfolded elemental meaning of the aesthetic pattern.

Aesthetic vs. Artistic Patterns of Experiencing

Aesthetic Patterning:

Participation in a “**purely experiential pattern**”
permeated by elemental meaning and
ulterior significance.

Now I just want to say a little word about this distinction between the *Aesthetic Patterning of Experience* and the *Artistic Patterning of Experiencing*. Although most of this class so far has been about art, none of us have actually been engaged in artistic creativity. I have been using paintings, works of art that I have high esteem for, as a way of introducing you to a *fuller exploration of your own aesthetic patterning of experiencing*. But you haven't actually been in the *artistic* patterning of experience, or probably most of you haven't.

So aesthetic patterning of experiencing is the participation in the purely experiential pattern, a purely experiential pattern that's permeated by elemental meaning and ulterior significance. It's a participation in art in an aesthetic patterning that for the most part, in this class so far, has been mediated by works of art. *But of course aesthetic patterning of experience is not limited to humanly created works of art. Aesthetic patterning of experience is something that one can do, provided that one doesn't have to be worried either for one's safety or violation of one's responsibilities. It's something that one can experience in everyday life.* It's something that people — perhaps the paradigmatic example is the way in which people are awestruck by the sunset. But you can be equally involved in an aesthetic patterning of experience by sitting on a park bench and just watching people, and squirrels, and pigeons, and birds move around. *The extent to which you just let yourself sense what's going on and let your eyes and ears see and hear what is in the natural world or in the human social worlds is an aesthetic pattern of experience. It's by withdrawing into the aesthetic patterns of experience mediated by works of art that we can return to our ordinary living; and to an aesthetic patterning of our ordinary experiences as well.* The world is beautiful, but we don't really have or take the time to just let it speak to us the way that these great paintings have been speaking to us.

An *Artistic Patterning of Experience* is different! You could say, in a certain sense, that an *artistic patterning of experience* is a little less free, a little less pure; it's a little more instrumentalized, because an artist is not just enjoying the aesthetic pattern of experience. The artist is working to get the proper way of expressing an aesthetic patterning of experience.

Aesthetic vs. Artistic Patterns of Experiencing

Artistic Patterning:

“Within the one who is experiencing [elemental meaning], the pattern in its complexity, its many-sidedness, is only implicit, folded up, veiled, unrevealed, unobjectified.”

“This process of objectifying is analogous to the process from the act of understanding to the definition. The definition is the inner word, an expression, an unfolding of what one has got hold of in the insight. Similarly, the purely experiential pattern becomes objectified, expressed, in a work of art”.
(*Topics*, 217-218).

And Lonergan refers to this by saying [that](#)

“Within the one who is experiencing [elemental meaning], the pattern of his experience in its complexity, its many-sidedness, is only implicit, folded up, veiled, unrevealed, unobjectified.” (*CWL* 10, pp. 217-218).

So if you have a wonderful experience of a natural scene, or of a scene with children playing, or a scene of human beings interacting and joking around in the plaza, *you may have a purely aesthetic patterning of those experiences, but they're not expressed! They're all just elemental!*

In order to express them, you have to do something that is a bit abstractive. *What painters do is that they're very selective, about the colours.* We saw that, for example, in the Mondrian painting of the farmhouse.

Landscape with Farmhouse

(circa 1906).

Piet Mondrian

Mondrian is very selective! It is very unlikely that those are the only colours in the natural scene that was the occasion for him to compose that painting. But *Mondrian was very selective about the colours he used to express the purely experiential experience that he was having, the aesthetic experience that he was having, in contemplating that natural setting, the farmhouse. He had to select the shapes and the colours that he was going to use to unfold his elemental contact or experience, in a way that would mediate, and make it easier for you or I to enter into the experience as he experienced it.*

And Lonergan says in *Topics in Education*:

“This process of objectifying,” that is to say, *expressing* the elemental contact, the aesthetic experience, **“is analogous to the process from the act of understanding to the definition. The definition is the inner word, an expression, an unfolding of what one has got hold of in the insight.”** (*CWL* 10, p. 218).

We talked about this several classes ago, when we were talking about definition and formulation of insights. And Lonergan is saying that *there is something similar that takes place when the purely experiential patterning becomes objectified and expressed in concrete choices of colours and sounds and movements in the various art forms.*

So just as, in expressing an insight, one has to pick out of the rich context within which the insight originally occurs, has to pick out the elements that are properly expressive of the insight,

so also, what artists do is to select out, and to put in additional elements for sensation, but the sensation of the audience, in order to more effectively communicate, to separate out from the booming, buzzing confusion that would interfere with entering into the purely experiential pattern that the artist is expressing.

Aesthetic vs. Artistic Patterns of Experiencing

Artistic Patterning

Patterning of experiences in search of insights so as to “**skilfully**” embody/objectify a purely experiential pattern “**in colours and shapes, in sounds and movements, in the unfolding situations and actions of fiction.**” (*Insight*, 208).

So Artistic Patterning is a kind of intellectual patterning. It’s using one’s intelligence, getting insights into how to best express the aesthetic pattern that one has. Painters have to get insights into how to paint, what techniques to use with brushes, and with various kinds of media. Artists have to have insights into how to express this undifferentiated, elemental, aesthetic experience.

And so the seeking of the *insights into how to express* is what differentiates the *purely aesthetic patterning of experience* from the *artistic patterning of experience*.

The Meaning of Paintings.

The meaning of painting is the *space* into which we are invited — not an ordinary space — not a space “represented” by the painting.

Meaning of the place more elemental than the Space of Chapter 5, where the place is situated in an explicitly formulated network of intelligible relations.

Making a new world visible, and/or the old world visible with new meanings.

Examples of such spaces:

Cézanne’s *Mont St. Victoire*,

Van Gogh’s *Starry Night*.

The Meaning of Paintings

“The virtual space to which one is invited by the picture

— and if one accepts, one is pulled out of one’s ready-made-world

— is a space to be seen.” (*Topics*, 224)

“The picture ‘puts there’ to be seen, in such a way that the space will be visible.” (*Topics*, 223)

And just to close, a couple of — In Chapter Nine of *Topics in Education*, Lonergan goes into particular kinds of fields or genres of art, and has some reflections on them. They’re worth meditating upon!

What's the meaning of paintings, according to Lonergan? The meaning of painting is the space into which we're invited. Recall when we were looking at the painting Madame Renoir: I drew the attention of the students and asked: What place is this? We can do that with any of these paintings! What place is this? It isn't ordinary place. None of these are ordinary places!

As I said earlier, *even the most representational art is abstract: meaning that the emphasis should be on the internal relations of colour and shape.* And I invite you to go to a museum. This is especially true of something to do in a museum, rather than through a reproduction: and go to any painting that you think is a very representational painting, something that's true to life, that you think has been painted to be made to look exactly like the figure or the landscape, as if you're looking. Go and look at it, and look very carefully; and even stand close to it. And *what you will discover*, if you look very carefully at a representational painting, especially if you look up close, *is how un-representational it is!!*

Things that you would, from a representational point of view, **have** called distortions or imperfections, that where you thought there was a homogeneity of colour, in fact there is a discontinuity. Where you thought every bit of colour was carefully painted in, in fact there are some small smears. *Those are all non-representational aspects of art, of painting.* So that every painting, in some sense, is done by a master artist in such a way as *to use a certain amount of freedom to be abstract, to abstract things, to deviate from perfect representation, for the sake of communicating this elemental meaning.*

And *the fundamental elemental meaning that painting is communicating is a meaning of place! What place is this?* And the answer to 'What place is this?' is not what we saw in Chapter Five: how do I locate this place by an intelligible network of relationships with places that I know of its significance. *It's the more elemental meaning of place, of the place of significance.* To say: What is this place? is to say: "What significance is this place?" Or, "What meaning does this place have?" *So what painters are doing is giving us a world that's different from our ready-made world; that makes space be visible, and be visible in new ways with new meanings!*

Mont St. Victoire

1902-1906

Paul Cézanne

And this is an example of that, of course. This is Cézanne's **Mont St Victoire**, one of his most famous paintings.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

And it's not so much a representation of a mountain, as an invitation into a space in which that mountain plays the dominant role, and gives the dominant characterization of this space.

Starry Night

1889

Vincent Van Gogh

And this, of course, is Vincent Van Gogh's **Starry Night**.

Short time allowed for contemplation of this work of art

It puts us into a space, and a particular kind and particular character of meaning.

The Meaning of Architecture:

Architecture embodies the places and 'ways' of a particular group's collective life.

The Meaning of Architecture

**“the world, or space, consists of ways and places ...
ways to get there and come back again”**

**“Architecture is the expression of the *centre* of one's
world, of the world of one's group.” — one's
“home”**

**“it is also the expression of the people's orientation
... it expresses the life that people have, the
orientation.”**

(Topics, 226)

Since we talked a little bit about Architecture when we were discussing Chapter Five a few weeks ago, I thought I'd conclude with just by sharing a couple of remarks from Lonergan's chapter on Art in *Topics in Education* about architecture.

**“the world, or space, consists of ways and places ...
ways to get there and ways to come back again.”** (*CWL*
10, p. 226).

Just think of what the word 'way' means: “I'm on my way!” Ways are not just physical paths; but ways are processes with goals and means.

**“Architecture is the expression of the *centre* of one's
world, of the world of one's group.” — of one's
“home” ...“it is also the expression of the people's
orientation ... the *way* of a people. it expresses the life
that people have, the orientation.”** (*CWL*, 10, p. 226).

Bridges of New York

Here's the expression of a modern urban American life, the ways and paths of Americans as they live, and the places where people call 'home', in such places.

Medieval Cathedral in Rouen

And this is the cathedral that we saw a couple of weeks ago [in Lecture Eight], expressing a way up, and a way in. It's characteristic of a medieval Christian life.

Rouen Cathedral in its Community

And the Cathedral is situated within its community. It makes this be a home!

Conclusion: an invitation to further explore the aesthetic mode of experiencing artworks and the world.

By way of conclusion, I would just like to say that hopefully my remarks about Lonergan's Philosophy of Art have given you *an enriched way of thinking about your own aesthetic patterning of experience*; and in particular, *have given you an enriched way of thinking about those very profound openings to the pure question, to the unrestricted wonder that accompanies our journeys, as we explore these internal patterns in painting, in architecture, in music, and in drama. And my hope is that this will begin to help you further self-appropriate your own artistic encounters, your own aesthetic encounters, and give deeper meaning and richness to your own appreciation of works of art and indeed of the world of human existence, and of your own living as a work of art.*

Thank you.