

The 'Rift-Design' Conundrum: Drawing as form-giving and knowing

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses a passage in Heidegger's 'The Origin of the Work of Art', which interrogates Albrecht Dürer's assertion that "art lies hidden within nature; he who can wrest it from her, has it". The article outlines Heidegger's investigation of the nature of artistic making in general and the act of drawing in particular, through a reflection on Dürer's use of the term 'wrest'. In outlining the form-giving powers of drawing on an ontological level, Heidegger offers the concept of the Riss—a word that can mean both to draw and to tear. The duality of the Riss is translated as the 'rift-design' a concept and a conundrum that facilitates an investigation of the truth claims of drawing. The Riss encompasses a 'strife' by which the artist 'wrests' art from nature. However, within this unity of opposites Heidegger diagnoses a dynamic also recognised by Heraclitus in a fragment passed down to us by Aristotle, and translated variously, including as follows: "cleaving apart bears together, and from bearings apart [comes], the most beautiful harmony". There is a suggestion that this may be a source for Heidegger's conception, which in turn represents a "correlative of Derrida's *différance*".

What is truth, that it can happen as, and even must happen as, art? (Heidegger, 1993: 163).

Introduction

For the best part of half a millennium drawing was at the core of education in art and design, its epistemological claim underwritten by neo-platonic theories of *disegno* (Goldstein: 1996). However, for over half a century that writ has no longer run. Consequently, the status of drawing and particularly descriptive drawing within the fine art (but also the design) curriculum has with the advent of conceptualism, waned—at least in North America and Western Europe. As Howard Singerman explains, in contemporary university art schools "language ... replaces both manual craft skills and traditional academic skills, the drawing of an earlier version of the professional artist" (Singerman, 1999: 8). Yet amid radical changes, involving the means of production of art, assertions of the inevitability of deskilling (Roberts, 2007: Singerman, 1999) and the shifting context with regard to the emergence of art and design as disciplinary practices (Singerman, 1999: 200–212), there remains a residual sense of drawing's resilience as a path to knowledge.

This article addresses a daunting question: how can we 'know' through drawing? The question is challenging, however the modus of this article is straightforward; it focuses on one thinker and primarily on one section of Martin Heidegger's seminal text, 'The Origin of the Work of Art'

(Heidegger, 1993: 140-212). Heidegger's discussion casts light on the significance of that act of disclosure that is the act of drawing, and proposes it as a singular avenue to new knowledge.

Many of Heidegger's insights resonate for the practitioner, including his recognition that the 'work of art' is inevitably characterised by struggle—a strife that is beyond mere technical challenge. He understands that a drawing, just as any artwork, must in some fundamental way be fought for and won. Equally resonant though is the seemingly contradictory insight that the setting down of a line is in many ways a circumspective, indeed a meditative act. Heidegger's text details the particular mixture of harmony and strife, of a struggle accompanied by circumspection, leading to sudden insight and understanding.

Heidegger specifically interrogates 'the work of art' in epistemological terms. Art for him is the "becoming and happening of truth" (Heidegger, 1993: 196). It is equally important to note is that truth is understood by Heidegger as *aletheia*—unconcealment. This concern with truth and the truth claims of art animates his examination of the *work* of art. In the text in question Heidegger presents drawing as a paragon, an archetypal artistic practice that facilitates a broader ontological questioning of art making as a path to truth.

The *Riss* as 'Rift-design'

Heidegger (1993: 195) begins the section in question with a reference to a "well known remark" by someone "bound to know what he was talking about", the master-draftsman Albrecht Dürer. Art, Dürer observes, "lies hidden within nature; he who can wrest it from her, has it" (Heidegger, 1993: 195). The gendered reference here is worthy of remark, though a thorough treatment of it is beyond the scope of this discussion. "Nature" is presented as feminine and the violence of the language, particularly the use of the term "wrest", foregrounds a link between art making and domination even assault, in terms of a taking that bears intimations of violation and rape. Heidegger's choice of this passage seems deliberate as it facilitates his purpose, which is a critique of the knowledge-as-dominion epistemological paradigm it represents. Dürer's account is employed as something of a 'straw man' set up to facilitate Heidegger's interrogation of the stance it represents, part of a more thoroughgoing rejection of the conventional epistemological stance of Western metaphysics. Dürer's account, with its overtones of rapine and assault upon nature epitomises that stance. It presents art and truth as the products of an enforced dominion over nature, precisely what Heidegger means to question. As we shall see, Heidegger does not ultimately reject the essential role that strife plays in the production of art, however in epistemological terms he eschews the aggression inherent in the 'knowledge-as-dominion' stance in favour of an alternative that emphasises circumspection. Dürer's account provokes in Heidegger a probing for a counterbalance to such 'normative' understandings of the "work of art" and leads him to his counterquestion:

how can the rift-design be drawn out if it is not brought into the Open by the creative sketch as a rift, which is to say, brought out beforehand as a conflict of measure and unmeasure? True, there lies hidden in nature a *rift-design*, a measure and a boundary and, tied to it, a capacity for bringing forth—that is, art. But it is equally certain that this art hidden in nature becomes manifest only through the *work*, because it lies originally in the *work* (Heidegger, 1993:195; emphasis added).

Noteworthy here is Heidegger's wordplay with regard to the twin connotations of the term 'work'. This draws our attention to the interrelationship between the passivity of the noun 'work' in the term "work of art" (as *artwork/object*), which he contrasts with the active sense presented by the verb 'work' that is in the sense of work as process, action and application. He playfully differentiates and by turns, conflates these meanings. In doing so, he highlights how, in a holistic sense these passive and active senses are conjoined within the term 'work', just as they are in a word like 'drawing'. This is significant point because conventional metaphysics tends to overlook this active sense. In another version of the text the following passage is included "art presences in the art-work [*Kunst-werk*]. But what and how is a work of art" (brackets in the original) (Heidegger, 2002: 2). Both

the hyphenation of *Kunst-werk* in the original and the question “*how* is a work of art” emphasise this active sense of the word.

Heidegger assembles an intricate argument that calls into question Dürer’s account, through an acute focus on Dürer’s use of the term “wrest” (*Reissen*). He begins by assembling the connotations of the German word *Riss*, firstly its relationship to the act of drawing. To “wrest” [*Reissen*] he explains, means to “draw out the rift [*Riss*] and to draw the design [*Riss*] with the drawing-pen [*Reissfeder*] on the drawing-board [*Reissbrett*]” (Heidegger, 1993: 195). This sense is evident in the way the word *Riss* is a component of a number of German compound words for example; floorplan (*Grundriss*), elevation (*Aufriss*), section (*Durchriss*) and outline (*Umriss*), in the sense of drawing but also, significantly, in the sense of writing (Heidegger, 1993: 195).

Heidegger then draws our attention to other connotations that initially seem counterintuitive in that the archetypically creative actions of drawing and designing are associated with destructive, even violent meanings, that also adhere to the German term *Riss*, such as ‘rift’, ‘tear’, ‘cleft’ or ‘breach’. This point is pivotal to Heidegger’s analysis—the *Riss*, in terms of its complex duality, is a conundrum, something evident in its translation as the dualistic “rift- design” (Heidegger, 1993:195). For Heidegger, as we have seen, this conundrum represents a chink in the defences of the metaphysical stance of Dürer’s account, and this chink facilitates his ontological analysis. We shall return to this paradox later and explore its relationship to Derrida’s *différance*.

‘Knowledge-as-Dominion’ and ‘Presence-at-Hand’

Heidegger calls Dürer’s stance into question on a number of counts including its indebtedness to two related epistemological paradigms. Firstly the ‘knowledge-as-dominion’ paradigm referred to earlier; and secondly the related ‘truth-as-correspondence’ paradigm. He also challenges the inherent stasis of Dürer’s conception of art as something passively “hidden within nature”. This he sees as indebted to the objectivist attitude towards art and truth, which regards both as “present-at-hand” (*vorhanden*). For Heidegger, the stance he terms “presence-at-hand” (*vorhandenheit*) offers an approach to “Things” that encounters them exclusively in an objectivist, analytical mode, regarding them as both precisely quantifiable or measurable, and perpetually available. Heidegger associates this approach with the “scientific” or “theoretical” attitude’ (Safrański, 2002: 97). “Presence-at-hand” he sees as the stance of the objective Cartesian observer concerned solely with the facts of the thing or concept rather than being authentically engaged with them in use.

Presence-at-hand is contrasted with a stance that Heidegger terms “readiness-to-hand” (*zuhandenheit*). This is identified with the situated, engaged, indeed transparent way we encounter things through use. His famous example of “readiness-to-hand” from *Being and Time* is the hammer (Heidegger, 1962: 98). We can never know what is essential about a hammer through objective analysis. As Heidegger sees it, “the less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become” (Heidegger, 1962: 98). Heidegger emphasises this kind of engagement in his analysis of the “work of art”. He wants to say that we may come to knowledge, truth and art through *work*, the kind of engagement we find in use and application. The kind of knowing we achieve through drawing belongs to this kind of engagement with things. His argument counters the detached, objectivist, and dominating stance evident in Dürer’s approach with a circumspective stance that is grounded in action and application and characterised by care.

Drawing as solicitous knowing

Drawing is not then, as Dürer would have it, a wresting of truth in the form of art from recalcitrant nature. Nor, pace Dürer, is art (or indeed truth) a kind of pre-existing passive, ready-made, ‘ready-at-hand’ entity “hidden within nature” that the artist/scientist may seek out and *grasp*. That represents

an attitude to truth critiqued elsewhere by John Dewey; whereby knowledge, or more precisely “learning” is conceived of as “something external, an accumulation of cognitions as one might store material commodities in a warehouse”, the conventional notion that “truth exists ready-made somewhere” (Dewey, 1930: 389-90). In *Being and Time* Heidegger employs another metaphor to question this commodification of knowledge when he writes, “the perceiving of what is known is not a process of returning with one’s booty to the ‘cabinet’ of consciousness after one has gone out and *grasped* it” (Heidegger, 1962: 89; emphasis added). Displacing this view Heidegger presents an alternative circumspective approach:

What we usually call ‘knowing’ is being acquainted with something and its qualities. In virtue of these cognitions we ‘master’ things. This mastering ‘knowledge’ is given over to a being at hand, to its structure and its usefulness. Such ‘knowledge’ seizes the being, ‘dominates’ it, and thereby goes beyond it and constantly surpasses it. The character of essential knowing is different it concerns the being in its ground—it intends Being. Essential knowing does not lord it over what it knows but is solicitous towards it (Heidegger, 1992: 3).

It is this latter kind of circumspect, ‘solicitous’ knowing that Heidegger recognises in art making and above all in drawing. This argument echoes other aspects of the essay, where as we have seen, Heidegger shifts focus from the “work of art” as *art-piece*, to the dynamic, engaged *work* (verb) of *art-making*. He wants to say with Dewey (Dewey, 1930: 389-90) that while the knowledge achieved through art and specifically drawing is indeed a revealing of something hidden, it is not as Dürer would have it, the uncovering of a placid entity *waiting* to be discovered, something merely ‘present-at-hand’, something as it were simply *there for the taking*. Rather the mode of knowing we encounter in drawing rests in the orbit of “readiness- to-hand”, a knowledge we acquire through ‘hands-on’ engagement, application and use. A knowing founded in application and *work*, which constitutes our “fundamental mode of being in which we disclose entities” (Stepanich, 1991: 21).

Heidegger suggests that the dominance of the theoretical attitude in Western thought is limiting, because there is a ‘deficiency’ in knowledge when it is at some remove from the world—when it is divorced from, or “holds back” from “producing and manipulating and the like”. If we look at “the Things” merely theoretically, we adopt an impoverished way of being in the world—we are merely “tarrying alongside”, concerned with mere representation: how things look (Heidegger, 1962: 88). He contrasts this attitude with the kind of knowing that truly belongs to *Dasein* or “being-in-the-world” which is a situated, engaged, concerned, and thereby more authentic, mode of knowing (Heidegger, 1962: 88-89). Indeed the core Heideggerian concept of *Dasein* implies just such a stance. As Feenberg puts it, “human beings, called ‘*Dasein*’ by Heidegger can only be understood as always already involved in a world ... The things of the world are revealed to *Dasein* as they are encountered in use ...” (Feenberg, 2005: 2).

Heidegger’s attitude to the ‘dead hand’ of “presence-at-hand” is reflected in something that Paul Klee says about creativity: “What is good is form-giving. What is bad is form. Form is the end, death. Form-giving is movement, action. Form-giving is life. These sentences constitute the gist of the elementary theory of creativity” (Klee, 1973: 269). Klee here recognises and rejects the same oppressive “presence-at-hand” stance that Heidegger questions, in favour of the “readiness-to-hand” stance of application and circumspection.

Drawing, *technē* and knowledge

In the schema outlined by Heidegger drawing has as strong an epistemological suit as any other path to knowledge. This is copper-fastened by Heidegger’s framing of the “work of art” and indeed the *work* of drawing, as forms of *technē*, a kind of knowledge. He reminds us that from the earliest Greek period, *technē* was associated with *episteme*: “both words are names for knowing in the widest sense” (Heidegger, 1977: 13). Both terms “mean to be entirely at home in something, to understand it and be expert in it” (Heidegger, 1977: 13).

This is consistent with Heidegger's conception of truth as *aletheia*, that is truth as 'unconcealment', in contrast to more imperialist understandings that equate truth with "correctness" or "correspondence". He laments the hegemony in Western thought of a conception of truth as "correctness in representation". In the text under examination Heidegger explains:

Truth means today and has long meant the conformity of knowledge with the matter. [...] How can the matter show itself if it cannot itself stand forth out of concealment, if it does not itself stand in the unconcealed? A proposition is true by conforming to the unconcealed, to what is true. Propositional truth is always, and always exclusively, this correctness ... The essence of truth which is familiar to us—correctness in representation—stands and falls with truth as unconcealment of beings (Heidegger, 1993: 176-177).

In Heidegger's thought *technē* has a profound ontological significance over and above simply that of making. *Technē* is rather "a mode of knowing" whereby "to know means to have seen, in the widest sense of seeing, which means to apprehend what is present, as such" (Heidegger, 1993: 184). *Technē* is therefore inexorably concerned with *aletheia*:

For Greek thought the essence of knowing consists in *aletheia*, that is, in the revealing of beings. It supports and guides all comportment toward beings. *Technē*, as knowledge experienced in the Greek manner, is a bringing forth of beings in that it *brings forth* what is present as such *out of* concealment *and* specifically *into* the unconcealment of its appearance; *technē* never signifies merely the action of making (Heidegger, 1993: 184).

The artist is for Heidegger "also a craftsman" (Heidegger, 1993: 184; emphasis added), but that is not essentially *why* he or she is *technites*. He or she is so because their activities, whether seen in terms of art or craft, have a common basis in *aletheia*. It is significant that in Heidegger's understanding of *technē*—practical making, doing and the production of art—are not separate from other aspects of art-making, neither are they disparaged by association with manual labour, as they traditionally have been in Western fine art education since the Renaissance. Rather they are seen as integrated within a process of 'creation'. They are, as Heidegger succinctly puts it, "pervaded and determined by the essence" of fine art making, they are undifferentiated from and "contained" within such creation (Heidegger: 1993: 184). The relationship then of such "doing" to art-making is conceived of holistically, where the intellectual, and manual, aspects are regarded as integrated. As Heidegger explains:

Technē means neither art nor skill, it means nothing like technique in the modern sense. We translate *technē* as "knowing". But this requires explication. Knowing here does not mean the result of mere observations about something present at hand which was formerly unfamiliar. Such items of information are always just accessory even if they are indispensable to knowing. Knowing in the general case of *technē* means looking out beyond what, in each case, is directly present at hand (Heidegger, 2000: 169).

***Technē* and strife**

In the context of art making, *technē*, may also be viewed in terms of struggle, even violence, whereby, as Heidegger elsewhere explains, "the knower", in the sense of knowledge represented by *technē*, is one who "fares into the midst of fittingness ... *draws* Being into beings [in the *draft*], and yet can never surmount the overwhelming" (my emphasis, brackets in original) (Heidegger, 2000: 171). The artist as 'knower' is characterised by Heidegger as "the one who is violence-doing, the creative one, who sets out into the un-said, who breaks into the un-thought, who compels what has never happened and makes appear what is unseen" (Heidegger, 2000: 171-72). He or she is then a kind of warrior-knower who literally wins new forms and thereby new knowledge in terms of the never before said, seen or thought. This sense of struggle inheres within the concept of the *Riss*. It represents the "rift" aspect contained within the duality of the "rift-design" concept. In Heidegger's view drawing's epistemological claims rest on this view of form-giving as knowing. In this regard Konrad Fiedler's observations of 1876 seem prescient:

art has nothing to do with forms that are found ready-made prior to its activity and independent of it. Rather, the beginning and the end of artistic activity reside in the creation of forms, which only thereby attain existence. What art creates is no second world alongside the other world which has an existence without art; what art creates is the world, made by and for the artistic consciousness. And so it is that art does not deal with some materials which somehow have already become the mental possession of man; that which has already undergone some mental process is lost to art. Because art itself is a process by which the mental possessions of man are immediately enriched (Fiedler, 1978: 48).

Heidegger likewise asserts the truth-establishing, knowledge-giving powers of art. The *Riss* as “rift-design” represents the white-hot cutting edge of this process breaking and dividing as it conjoins and creates. Heidegger uses the term “holy chaos” to describe the “creative origin of the visible world” which represents the “originating region” out of which truth appears and from which the artist wrests her art (Young, 2001: 156-58). It is for this reason that Heidegger champions the intuitive and direct insight found in visual art. Cezanne is Heidegger’s “poet’ *par excellence*” (Young, 2002: 19). As Young explains Heidegger believes that through Cezanne’s work we experience “the birth of the meaningful world of objects [or things] out of the numinously meaning-less yet structured ground” (Young, 2001: 156).

Measure and unmeasure—world and earth

The “rift-design” concept is two sided encompassing both creative and destructive aspects. Heidegger sees it as incorporating a turbulent dynamic born of antagonism, of essential elements in sway to pulses of attraction and repulsion. He terms these elements variously “measure” and “unmeasure” or “world” and “earth”. These elements are held in place even as they draw apart in a centrifugal furore resembling the dance that swirls about Eliot’s “still point of the turning world” (Eliot, 1943: 5). The drawing or “work of art” is brought “forth ... into the Open” from this maelstrom, Heidegger’s “holy chaos” (Young, 2001: 102).

“World” in Heidegger’s parlance, signifies the sum total of the experiences and relationships encountered in *Dasein* or being-in-the-world—that which being affords us. As Young explains “world” represents “what, to us, is intelligible. ... the horizon of all our horizons ... that which is ‘lit up’” for us. “Earth”, on the other hand represents what is not so illuminated, “the dark penumbra of unintelligibility” the “originating region” (Young, 2002: 8), out of which, as Heidegger phrases it the world “worlds”. Heidegger also associates this with nothing; literally “no-thing” a significant point we shall return to later.

These binary categories of “measure”/“unmeasure”, “world”/“earth” are pivotal to Heidegger’s understanding of the nature of truth. Truth as *aletheia*—unconcealment, can never be absolute. What is measurable can only occur within the horizon of what is intelligible or knowable for us as *Dasein*. Surrounding and encompassing that horizon—the province of measure—is a vast expanse of “unmeasure”, the realm of “earth” of the unfathomable and the uncanny. However these phenomena must be understood in terms of a dynamic. “Earth” represents withdrawal, retreat into concealment (Robertson, 1984: 245), however “earth” is also inherent in all becoming or happening. The work of art is never completely extricated from the “earth” into the “world”, but shimmers in the breach—something that lends uncanny depth to powerful works of art, drawings for example—the sense that they always contain something more that they may yet yield up. Allen explains this dynamic, capturing the centrifugal dynamic of the “*Riss*”:

Through the artwork the earth and the world reveal their essence as perpetual conflict in which their mutual striving occurs in opposing directions. This provides a model for unity which is neither static nor homogeneous, as each element is brought to its utmost pitch in striving against the other and, as each side provides the conditions for the other they are bound together through perpetual striving ... in separating the world from the earth we *draw* out its configuration, and in

sketching this out, we set apart its ground. The *sketch* and the *tear* are two sides of the same *line* (Allen, 2007: 72; emphasis added).

Drawing as strife

The “rift-design” embodies a kind of necessary violence in bringing the drawing “into the Open”. This conflict represents a “battle” (Harries, 2009: 120), familiar to everyone who has ever striven to set down the ‘right’ mark or line. Samuel Beckett bears witness to this strife in a poem describing his first hand observations of the artist Avigdor Arikha making a drawing:

Siege laid again to the impregnable
without. Eye and hand fevering after
the unself. By the hand it unceasingly
changes the eye unceasingly changed.
Back and forth the gaze beating against
unseeable and unmakeable. Truce for a
space and the marks of what it is to
be and be in face of. Those deep marks
to show (Beckett in Atik, 2001: 32)

Every ‘first-mark’ on the unsullied page though a creative act has a violent aspect, something indispensable to the drawing process. The “becoming and happening of truth” that is a work of art can only come about as the result of a primal strife between “world” and “earth”. Every drawn line both divides and conjoins. As Clark puts it:

the *Riss* is the tearing apart and drawing together whereby earth and world come into being through their antagonism. It can only be elusive because, though all-determinant, in itself it is nothing, only the *difference* from out of which ‘earth’ and ‘world’ become manifest (Clark, 2002: 54).

We encounter here a further paradox of the “rift-design”. The drawn line, though “all- determinant” is nonetheless somehow nebulous. This tallies with a long held understanding of drawing epitomised by the Greek foundational myth in which origin of the art is associated with something as transient as the Corinthian maid’s tracing of the outline of her sleeping lover’s fleeting shadow. In Greek optics moreover, line, particularly geometric line, was seen as particularly pure and otherworldly. Perfect linear form was, Martin Jay tells us, “seen as the essence of illumination and it existed whether perceived by the human eye or not” (Jay, 1994: 29). This conception of light termed *Lumen* is echoed in the Renaissance concept of *disegno interno* (Goldstein, 1996: 31-32). The alternative Greek conception of light is *Lux*, “the actual experience of human sight”, comprising “color, shadow, and movement was accounted as important as form and outline” (Jay, 1994: 29). *Lux* is in turn equivalent to the Renaissance concept *coloré*. Jay relates these two conceptions of light—*Lumen* and *Lux*—to “the alternating traditions of *speculation* with the eye of the mind and *observation* with the two eyes of the body” respectively (Jay, 1994: 29).

Ethereal line

If in drawing an arm one inscribes a line that describes a contour, the act is in one significant way a pure act of invention. There are no such entities as line or contour belonging to the three-dimensional scene described. One is, in a sense, drawing what does not exist. As Umberto Eco explains: “if I take a sheet of paper and draw the profile of a horse, the only property that the pictured horse has (the continuous black line) is the only property that the real horse does not have” (Eco, 1999: 348). A line drawing then, in its detached, cerebral, purity remains somehow entirely nebulous, no-thing in Clarks phrase, “only the *difference*”. Drawing a line is thereby an act of pure differentiation. This understanding resonates, with more recent structuralist and deconstructivist approaches, notably Derrida’s integrated concepts of the *trait* and of *différance*. Both concepts are

indebted to Heidegger's *Riss*. As Robertson explains, "the path of thought which leads Derrida to *différance* is the same path which leads Heidegger to the [*Riss*]" (Robertson 1984: 14).

The ambiguity of the *Riss* allows Heidegger to mine a further deep-seated seam of meaning. The complex event that is the drawing of a line is analysed in a particularly rich passage:

Strife is not a rift [*Riss*], as a mere cleft is ripped open; rather, it is the intimacy with which opponents belong to each other. This rift carries the opponents into the provenance of their unity by virtue of their common ground. It is a basic design [*Grundriss*], an outline sketch [*Auf-riss*] that draws the basic features of the upsurge of the clearing of beings. This rift does not let the opponents break apart; it brings what opposes measure and boundary into its common outline. [...] The rift is the drawing together, into a unity, of sketch and basic design, breach and outline [*Umriss*] (Heidegger, 1993: 165).

Heidegger evokes the harmonisation and integration of disparate elements into a unified whole whose components "do not break apart" but are brought together in a *Gestalt*.

The *Riss*, the trait and *différance*.

Jacques Derrida translates the *Riss* as the *trait* (Derrida, 1997: 32). Remarking on the passage from Heidegger cited above, Derrida notes Heidegger's use of a repetition of composite nouns, what he calls "apparent modifications or properties of the *Riss* (Auf-, Grund, [...] Um-, etc.)". These, Derrida terms "traits of the trait"; they do not, he insists represent mere "modifications to a subject, a substance, or a being" (Derrida, 1998: 127), because the *trait* or *Riss* is neither a subject, a substance nor a "being", but a different kind of entity entirely. It is the kind of entity that facilitates the "strip[ping] away" of "ontological discourse on substance, predicate, proportion, logic and rhetoric" (Derrida, 1998: 127), and it thereby allows us to see the making of art in the context of *différance*. Derrida suggests that:

The *trait* is therefore nothing. The incision of the *Aufriss* is neither passive nor active, neither one nor multiple, neither subject nor predicate; it does not separate more than unites. All the oppositions of value have their proper possibility in *différance*, in the between of its divergence which brings together as much as it demarcates (Derrida, 1997: 32).

Deep in the "incision" that is the *Riss/trait*, an incision that unites as much as separates, in the protean "between" space of conjoining and "divergence" we find *différance*, Heidegger's "no-thing", pregnant with possibility. George Steiner suggests that "Heidegger's central paradox" is related to this insight, "that Being is in the final analysis, an emergence, an epiphany out of Nothingness". This is however not the nothingness of normal parlance but what Steiner describes as "an active" (Steiner, 1987: 45), "charged nothingness" (135). This is what Heidegger refers to when he suggests that "*das Nichten des Nichts 'ist' das Sein*: the negation of nothingness 'is' Being" (Steiner, 1987: 154). Heidegger's "nothingness" is what lies outside of our horizon of knowledge, Young's "dark penumbra of unintelligibility", the "originating region" (Young, 2002: 8). This is because for Heidegger "truth is un-truth, insofar as there belongs to it the reservoir of the not-yet-revealed, the un-uncovered, in the sense of concealment" (Heidegger, 1993: 185). This "reservoir" is Heidegger's "nothing", what he terms "the sheer "not" of beings" (Heidegger, 1993: 196).

Harmony and strife and the rendering line

Michael Robertson hears in Heidegger's description of the *Riss* echoes of a "Heraclitean fragment" of presocratic origin, passed down through Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*: "τὸ ἀντίχουν σὺμφηρόν kai ἐκ τῆν διαφηρόντων καλλιστὴν ἁρμονίαν" (Robertson, 1984: 240). This is translated variously as follows: "that which is in opposition is in concert, and from things that differ comes the most beautiful harmony"; or in another version: "Cleaving apart bears together, and from bearings apart, the most beautiful harmony" (Robertson, 1984: 241). In Robertson's interpretation, "that which is in

opposition is in concert ... suggests at once the essential thought of Structuralism, the interrelation of opposing elements in a systematic and harmonious whole" (Robertson, 1984: 240). He draws a useful comparison between the complexity of the German *Riss* and the duality of meaning within the English word "cleave" which can mean both to split, sever, separate "with violence", but also to adhere or unite (Robertson, 1984: 241). An apt comparison has also been made between the word *Riss* and the English words "rend" and "render" this is a particularly useful comparison given that the verb to render can also mean to draw (Moi, 2006: 14-15).

Robertson explores and outlines the etymological relationship between the verbs to "differ" and to "cleave" in the context of both Heidegger's *Riss* and Derrida's formulation of *différance* (Robertson, 1984: 240). The Greek word *diaphérō* from which *diapheróntōn* of the original fragment stems, also has a close correspondence to the French word *différer*. Both embody the sense of "carrying away in different directions" but also the idea of deferment central to Derrida's conception of *différance* (Robertson, 1984: 241). This casts light on the richness of meaning of the *Riss*, in terms of its relationship to the term cleave meaning to differ, defer and conjoin.

Granting the possibility of truth

In answer to the question how can we know through drawing? Heidegger posits the complexity of the *Riss*, as "rift-design" which represents both the "sketch and the tear" which Allen recognises as "two sides of the same *line*", that ethereal, nebulous, fleeting line, which is both difficult to win and to pin down. A line moreover, that while merely a differentiation is nonetheless protean and meaningful.

As a mode of *technē* drawing represents a royal road to form giving as knowledge creation. However drawing's epistemological significance is increasingly overlooked in what Heidegger describes as the "incessant frenzy of rationalization" (Heidegger, 1993: 449). He reminds us of what he terms a more "sober-minded" thinking (Heidegger, 1993: 449) that recognises this phenomenon and the limitations of the truth-as-correspondence paradigm, or as he puts it, a conception of truth concerned exclusively with the "conformity of knowledge with the matter" (Heidegger, 1993: 176). In this way he questions the hegemony of an epistemological paradigm that sees conceptual, propositional and mathematical paradigms of knowledge as somehow sacrosanct. That stance, he suggests, is concerned merely with truth as "correctness in representation", it ignores unconcealment, the more fundamental truth represented by "*aletheia*" (Heidegger, 1993: 176-177). *Aletheia* is for Heidegger primal. It is the "Opening" which "first grants the possibility of truth" (Heidegger, 1993: 446). Scientific truth, so fetishized in our era, is in this view secondary. Heidegger turns on its head the doctrine that privileges scientific knowledge over knowledge gained through the practice of art. Derrida would seem to follow Heidegger's lead in this:

the positive sciences of signification can only describe the work and the fact of *différance*, the determined differences and the determined presences that they make possible. There cannot be a science of *différance* itself in its operation, as it is impossible to have a science of the origin of presence itself, that is to say of a certain non-origin. *Différance* is therefore the formation of form (Derrida, 1997: 32).

The "origin of presence" is, as Derrida recognises, a "non-origin", an echo of Heidegger's "no-thing", that region of "unmeasure", which represents the origin and ultimate source of beings and of art. Derrida view also reflects Heidegger's suggestion that the remit of science is properly confined to the region of "measure" of "facts" of "determined" (Heidegger would say predetermined) "differences" and "presences". They each give a similar account of the process through which the un-determined "differences" and "presences" embodied within art emerge in terms of the *Riss* and *différance*. Most significant perhaps is Derrida's description of *différance* as "the formation of form", an idea that resonates with Heidegger's presentation of the *Riss*.

Conclusion

In Heidegger's vision the drawn line represents a singular means of form-giving. He traces the relationship between the act of drawing as a form of *technē*, an assisted bringing forth and poiesis the overarching category of "bringing forth" which encompasses both *technē* and the category of *physis*. *Physis* signifies those things that, as Aristotle puts it, "have their origin in themselves" (Aristotle, 1850: 156), something we term nature, but which the Greeks understood as a "self-unfolding emergence" from obscurity (Clark, 2002, p.32).

Heidegger's vision effectively calls into question the "epistemological privilege" (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 65) of the natural sciences within the university. What Dürer terms 'nature' cannot, for Heidegger, be the sole valid source of truth, because nature or *physis* (unaided bringing forth) is merely a subcategory of the all-embracing category of *poiesis* (bringing forth). This is the basis of Heidegger's questioning of the commonplace assumption, encountered in Dürer's text, that the study of hard and fast nature is, or can be, the bedrock of knowledge.

If science looks to nature for its epistemic validation, then for Heidegger the processes and practices of art, drawing for example, have no less an epistemic claim. George Steiner characterises Heidegger's understanding of the early Greek conception of these relationships:

The blossom breaking from the bud and unfolding into its proper being ... is, at once, the realization of *physis* and of *poiesis*, of organic drive—Dylan Thomas's "green fuse" [...] Originally, *technē* had its pivotal place in this complex of meanings and perceptions. It also sprang from an understanding of the primacy of natural forms and from the cardinal Greek insight that all "shaping," all construction of artifacts, is a focused knowing (Steiner, 1987: 137).

Heidegger's rehabilitation of *technē* and the truth claims of art, sets the truth uncovered by art (as *technē*) on an equal, if not higher, footing than scientific truth whose veracity rests on mere "correctness in representation" (Heidegger, 1993: 177). Heidegger posits an alternative vision. The drawn line as "rift-design" is his paragon of *technē*, of "shaping" or form-giving, in Steiner's terms, "a focused knowing".

Tim Ingold references Paul Klee's understanding of the primacy of form giving outlined earlier, Klee insisted that, "Art does not reproduce the visible but makes visible" (Klee, 1961: 76). Ingold's explication echoes Fiedler's words also encountered earlier:

[Art] does not ... seek to replicate finished forms that are already settled, whether as images in the mind or as objects in the world. It seeks, rather, to join with those very forces that bring form into being. Thus the line grows from a point that has been set in motion, as the plant grows from its seed (Ingold, 2010: 2).

That line described by Ingold is Heidegger's *Riss*, an all-determining though nebulous and ethereal line, a cleaving, rendering and differentiating *trait*. It embodies the duality of the "rift-design" that tears as it bears *form* into the "Open" region where *Dasein* may encounter it as something new, something wonderful, something we have cause to call knowledge.

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