We are familiar with theories of liturgy. What could it mean to talk about the liturgy of theory? *Leitourgia* originally meant public service or, more literally, public work (from the Greek, *leitos-ergon*)—work that was customarily associated with the celebration of religious festivals. Today, "liturgy" refers almost exclusively to the concrete observances of divine worship. Liturgy is practical, something one does (or that many do). Theory is . . . "theoretical. " To theorize about liturgical practices is not to participate in them. It is to observe and reflect upon them. Theory is not itself a form of divine worship.

This is the way we are used to thinking about the relation between theory and liturgy, reflection and practice. My aim, in this lecture, is to recall us to a different way of thinking. Since the one I have just outlined is essentially modern, I will be drawing on ancient (even pre-Christian) sources. For the most part, I will be asking you to join me in an attempt to recollect the etymological and experiential roots of words whose meanings we now take for granted. The primary motivation behind this effort is to arrive at a deeper understanding of what it could mean to talk about something we seem to have little trouble talking about. If the liturgy of theory is difficult for us to conceptualize, contemplative practice should be just as difficult. While a great deal has been said about contemplation as something one does, still there is room to wonder about what it could really mean to talk about contemplation as being practical. There is a pressing need, I believe, to ask what the philosopher-theologian, Josef Pieper, could have meant when he wrote that:

> Whenever in reflective and receptive contemplation we touch, even remotely, the core of all things, the hidden, ultimate reason of the living universe, the divine foundation of all that is...whenever and wherever we thus behold the very essence of reality—there is an activity that is meaningful in itself taking place.¹

The same gap that separates liturgy from theory, doing from thinking, service (or work) from speculation, makes contemplation seem merely theoretical. This is most obvious where contemplation takes the form of philosophical reflection, which, for Aristotle, was not only the study of divine things, but was itself a divine activity or way of life.² Philosophy has now drifted almost entirely from its contemplative origins. But forms of contemplative activity that are still more closely associated with religious practice are conceptualized in the same way. "To contemplate," Pieper says, "means first of all to see."³ In response to the question, Why are you here on earth? What were you born to do?, the Greek philosopher, Anaxagoras, was supposed to have said: "to behold the sun, the moon, and the heavens."⁴ How are we to understand, let alone embrace, such an impractical answer to such a vital question? How are we to make sense of Teilhard de Chardin's claim that "all life is contained in the act of seeing"?⁵ What could it mean to practice these ideas?

---

¹ *Source: Josef Pieper, *Eschatological Contemplation*.*
² *Source: Christopher A. Dustin, *The Liturgy of Theory: Lessons on Beauty and Craft*.*
³ *Source: Josef Pieper, *Eschatological Contemplation*.*
We confront the same obstacles to understanding and to practical acceptance when it comes to the core elements of Benedictine monasticism. In her remarkable account of the Chalice of Repose project, Therese Schroeder-Sheker notes the centrality, to Benedictine spirituality, of the contemplation of the beautiful:

The human being needed exposure to beauty in order to become inwardly beautiful, and in becoming inwardly radiant and beautiful, one integrated beauty back into the world . . . . [The monastic] community lived within a spiritual milieu wherein adoration was expressed, in addition to prayer and liturgy, through the maintenance, cultivation, and refinement of beauty. At the mystical level, one was encouraged to experience the countenance of God in the experience of beauty.  

Within the Benedictine community, beauty mattered, in the sense both of its spiritual significance and of its physical maintenance and perception, as something to be seen contemplatively (in Pieper's sense). Does beauty still matter to us, in this way? My own sense is that it does not, and that this is a problem for us. The problem is not just one of secularization. It stems from the difficulty we have conceptualizing the centrality of contemplation to the practice of religious faith. It stems, more fundamentally, from the difficulty we have conceptualizing the centrality of practice to contemplation itself.

II.

What could it mean to say that one's purpose in living is "to behold (eis theorian) . . . "? Our "theory" comes from the Greek theoria, of which the Latin contemplatio was a translation. It is appropriate, then, that contemplation be understood as theoretical. But what does this originally mean? As Indra McEwen has pointed out, modern interpretations of theoria tend to emphasize its non-participatory, speculative aspect. Such interpretations take for granted the modern sense of theory as detached (scientific) observation or analysis. Theoria is originally derived from thea (outward appearance or show, as in theater) and horao (to look at something, closely and attentively). With a view to its primary meaning, theoria is perhaps best translated as "spectating" and theoros (theorist) as "spectator." But care must be taken in understanding the spectatorial attitude of the theoros. A theoros is someone who sees, but this seeing does not necessarily imply detachment in the way that a theoretical stance is supposed to be detached. Theoroi were, most commonly, ambassadors to sacred festivals. The goal of these emissaries was to learn from what they saw. They were looking for knowledge, or understanding. But while the assumption has been that these theorists observed without participating, the ancient sources suggest that theoroi did actually participate in these public spectacles by offering sacrifices and taking part in the dances and games that formed an integral part of the practice of divine worship.

To recall the original meaning of theory is to recall the original meaning of the human activity of theorizing, grounded in the experience of theoria— not an object of detached observation or purely cognitive analysis, but a performative spectacle in which one takes part with one's body as well as one's mind, with one's senses and emotions as well as one's thoughts. The theoroi's "seeing" was active and experientially engaged. He was literally and figuratively moved by (he "got into") what he saw.
It should be noted that these spectacles were not just visual. Music and dance (along with theatrical performances) were essential components. And while as a matter of historical fact theoretical spectacles were usually centered around religious festivals, *theoria* was understood as religious in a profounder sense. The Greek *thea* (with the accent on the second syllable) also means goddess. The *thea* of theater could thus be read as the *thea* of theology. Ancient etymologists tended to assume that this was the root of *theoria*, and that a *theoros* was someone who performed service to, or had care for, a god (ora means "care"). Modern linguists tend to dismiss these ancient readings. But if we bear in mind that accents were not introduced into the Greek language until the third century b.c., and that, when applied to such archaic terms, they may artificially differentiate between elements of meaning that were experienced as belonging together, we do better if we attempt to understand the root of *theoria* as being both divine and spectacular, and to understand theory as originating in a seeing that was itself a form of worship. Martin Heidegger's reading of *theoria* as a "reverent paying heed to the unconcealment of what presences" is an invitation to do just that.\(^9\)

The ability, not simply to examine or explain, but to gaze attentively upon—to dwell with—the outward appearances in which "the core of all things, the hidden...foundation of all that is" is made visible, is what Pieper means by contemplative activity. By harboring mystery, such spectacles move us to wonder.\(^11\) In Homer, the verb *theaomai* means "to gaze upon with wonder" or to see with wondering eyes. Both the verb *thaumazein* (to wonder, or marvel), and the noun *thauma* (a wonder, or marvel), are closely related to *theaomai*, and thus to *theoria*. If it is the mind that thinks, in Homer, it is the eyes that wonder.\(^12\) Wonder wants a spectacle. This is the origin of theory. We may recall, in this light, how Plato's *Republic* begins: Socrates left the city and went down to the Piraeus to attend a religious festival. He wanted to say a prayer to the goddess as well as to behold the spectacle.\(^13\) Socrates is a *theoros*, one who goes to see and to pray. The opening scene of the *Republic* preserves the unity of these moments. To see, in the ancient sense of *theoria*, is to pray. The philosopher's vision is, or was, a participatory and prayerful one. *Eidos*—the word that is used for what we call a Platonic Form or "idea"—is rooted in the Greek words for (and concrete experience of) seeing and being seen. This is a link that our association of ideas with concepts has severed. *Eidos* still draws its meaning from its original source in Socrates' characterization of a philosopher as a *philotheamonas*—one who loves the spectacle (the sights and sounds) of truth.\(^14\)

### III.

*Theoria* is contemplative seeing—an activity where one participates in what one sees. How, then, are we to understand the sense in which contemplation is or involves practice? It might help to recall that, in Homer, one "sees with wondering eyes" when a spectacle reveals a divine presence, or, as McEwen notes, "when the sight beheld is of something particularly well made."\(^15\) A phrase that appears often in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is *thauma idesthai*, "a wonder to behold." As McEwen points out, on every occasion this phrase is used it describes a beautifully or divinely crafted piece of work.

The Greek word for craft (or art) is *techne*. Here again, the recollection of origins enables us to see *theoria* and *techne* (theory and practical skill) as more intimately related than we would otherwise take them to be. If *theoria* takes root in the reverent seeing of, and wondering at, a beautifully made thing that is in some way an intimation of the divine, *techne* was, as McEwen
puts it, "the very revelation of the divine in experience."\textsuperscript{16} While the technological has come to be understood in purely instrumental terms, as (in Heidegger's words) "a man-made means to an end established by man," ancient sources suggest that techne was understood, more fundamentally, as a "making visible."\textsuperscript{17} The craftsman's activity (according to this understanding) does not simply involve the imposition of form on matter, or the practical application of a body of knowledge. What the craftsman does is let kosmos—order, form, arrangement—appear through the making of the artifact. Craft is a revelation of kosmos, which is simultaneously discovered (known or seen), and allowed to appear, through the craftsman's activity.\textsuperscript{18}

This making visible was not a matter of objective representation (or symbolization, in the modern sense), but a realization—a recognition that is at once an actualization, or making real. As McEwen writes,

> The discovery of a pattern seems . . . to be an inherent feature of the human experience of making. Whether he or she thinks about it or not . . . a person who makes something implicitly assumes the existence of an order or standard of rightness that transcends all recipes and rules of composition . . . . This pattern can be thought of as a single, immutable template to be traced or copied...or it can be thought of as a mutable rhythm governing a pattern of movement, like the figure of a dance: a rhythm or order (kosmos) that is rediscovered with each new tracing of the figure.\textsuperscript{19}

As we know, kosmos could also mean adornment or ornament—as in cosmetic, which for us has assumed the connotation of mere superficiality. In Homeric Greek, chros (meaning skin or color) was the word used to refer to the living body.\textsuperscript{20} As such, the body was understood and experienced as a visible surface, not in the sense in which we regard skin as mere surface, but as the radiance of an inner being.\textsuperscript{21} For the Greeks, epiphaneia meant both "surface" and "appearance," but did not carry the meaning that "epiphenomenal" carries for us. What lay, or rather showed, on the surface was not unreal, nor did it necessarily cover up. As McEwen observes, "when a woman kosmese (adorned) herself, she wrapped her chros in a second skin or body, in order to bring the living surface-body so clothed to light; to make it appear." When, in Homer, female divinities adorn or literally wrap themselves in kosmos in order to go dancing, the implication is that the kosmos of the dance is a reflection of their own kosmos, and vice versa.\textsuperscript{22} This order, or kosmos, is not one that is imposed on brute matter, but one that emerges reciprocally as the dancer traces the patterns of the dance.

Dance is a craft. So is weaving. In Homeric usage something that is well-crafted, put together or assembled (carefully wrought), was called daidalon. In the Odyssey this word is applied frequently to textiles. Textiles are daidala when they are tightly woven or well-fitted, and display an especially luminous quality—when they "shimmer with dancing light and seem to have a life of their own."\textsuperscript{23} Scholars have argued that the iridescent patterns that made a woven cloth daidala were not embroidered on or applied to a material surface that was simply there (like formless matter). They were woven into the surface itself, in such a way that, as the weaver practiced her weaving, "the pattern (kosmos) would have appeared with the surface of the cloth, whose making would have been an activity that entailed great skill and a highly complex pattern of movement of shuttle over loom."\textsuperscript{24} This physical movement would incorporate its own kosmos, whose display was not experienced as a merely human production, but as the revelation of an order that was not entirely subject to the human will. If anything, it was the
order (rather than the surface of the cloth) that was experienced as already there, unseen and waiting to be discovered. The word for weaving, or the actual practice of plying the loom, was *hyphainein*, which literally means "bring to light." *Hyphainein* is related to *epiphaneia*. Weaving was an epiphany, or unveiling.

The order that *techne* makes visible is not what we would call merely aesthetic. *Areros* is a very old Greek word meaning well-adjusted or perfectly fitted together. It is the root of *harmonia*, which in Homer is often applied to the craft of ship-building.25 In ship-building *harmonia* works, not just insofar as the proper fit or attunement of the joints allows the ship to stay afloat and to trace an orderly course through the water, but also in the way that it makes an otherwise unseen harmony visible. A well-made ship is in visual and functional harmony both with itself and with its surrounding element, whose own *kosmos* or patterns are revealed in its wake. These elemental patterns are made visible in and by the ship's form even when it is not afloat or literally functioning. Just as the shipbuilder's activity involves working with, rather than simply working on, his material (responding creatively to its grain), the artifact itself stands in a similar relationship to its natural environment. It serves, not only as an instrument of conveyance (for *theoroi*, perhaps), but as an occasion for revelation and discovery (for *theoria*). That is, as a revelation of *kosmos*.26

In Homer, the spectacles that are described as *thauma idesthai* (wonders to behold) are all *daidala*—beautifully wrought artifacts. What makes them so marvelous is the unseen order they bring to light. This could be seen as the source, not only of the creative process, but of life itself. Things that are *thauma idesthai* are often so described because they seem to have a life of their own. This is not a life that the craftsman alone bestows. Art or craft is related to giving birth (as *techne* is related to *tiktein*) but is, as Heidegger suggests, an "occasion" rather than a cause. The craftsman is not the source of the order that lives in the artifact, but rather "lets it come forth into presencing."27 The pre-Socratic philosopher, Anaximander, was a "theorist." He was also a craftsman, and is credited with making a map, a globe, and a sundial. If, in fashioning a sundial, the craftsman succeeds in making a temporal order visible, he owes his success to something he does not make. What the craftsman does is provide the occasion for the sun to cast the shadow that allows *kosmos* to appear. He can only create order by acknowledging its ultimate source. What the craftsman makes in fashioning the sundial is not all of what is made visible. He gives form to the artifact, arranging its parts in a certain way. The *kosmos* that he makes visible through his work is one that is not of any human being's making. The "bringing forth into appearance" of *techne*, and the "reverent paying heed" of *theoria*—the beautiful and the divine—are thus joined.

IV.

If *theoria* involves an attentive seeing, with wondering eyes, of a divine or beautifully made thing, *techne* involves the making visible of something that is seen as divinely made, even if it is man-made. The skilled craftsman was himself a *theoros*. His making is grounded in and provides an occasion for contemplative seeing.

The convergence of these sources (*theoria* and *techne*, theory and craft) can help us to understand the deeper sense in which contemplation involves practice. *Theoria* is rooted in wonder, and we are unaccustomed to thinking about wonder as something that is practiced—either as an activity that is performed regularly, or as one that requires preparation. A craft, or
skill, is practical in both of these senses, in addition to being useful. It is routinely practiced, and it takes practice. If we fail to understand the practicality of contemplative seeing, it is because we fail to understand how it is originally related to craft—not in the way that it produces a useful result, but in the way that techne itself was originally understood as both a revelation and a realization of the divine.

Just as the theoros beholds a spectacle, but is not a detached spectator, the artist or craftsman (the technician in the original sense of techne) is not a mere doer. The Greek word that was used to designate a craftsman’s function was ergon (task, work, deed). Ergon does not refer merely to the particular actions performed by the individual who builds a ship, weaves cloth, dances, or makes music. Nor does it refer merely to the finished product. Like kosmos—which can mean, not only order or arrangement, but ordering or arranging—ergon comprises both the working and the work (the means and the end) and holds them together in the way that the English word still does, when we use it to refer to an artist’s work. Ergon refers to an activity from which process and product cannot be separated out—a process whose end is contained within it.

In allowing kosmos to appear, the craftsman’s work involves both an ordering and a revelation, or an unveiling, of order. Order is not simply brought about by the craftsman. It is what his making makes visible. A dance or a musical performance is both a technical making and a theoretical spectacle. The order that is revealed is not simply produced by the musician’s playing or the dancer’s dancing. Order and ordering are reciprocal, which we can see if we remind ourselves that the craftsman’s activity—the ordering—is itself ordered. The bodily movements of the weaver at the loom, or the musician at the instrument, can be as beautiful to see as the music is to hear, or the cloth is to look at and touch. They are—they have to be—as ordered, as carefully arranged, or intricately patterned (as harmonious) as the finished product. They are not ordered by the craftsman or artist, but by the work. They too are an epiphany of kosmos. If we take seriously the dual sense of kosmos as both order and ordering, and of ergon as both process and product, we do better to say, not just that music is a revelation of kosmos, but that the making of music is kosmos “presencing.”

This is why it takes practice, both in the sense of regular engagement or participation—doing it over and over, as the shuttle moves over the loom—and in the sense of preparation—the repeated performance, or rehearsal, through which certain capacities or skills are developed or actualized. If the craftsman’s activity is not a mere means, neither is the preparation it requires. Rather than aiming at a separate result, or product, it only draws one more deeply into that for which one is preparing oneself. One becomes a musician by, as Aristotle would say, performing musical actions—by playing repeatedly. The goal of this practice is to make oneself musical, so that one not only produces notes but plays musically. What Aristotle said about philosophical contemplation could also be said about the making of music—that it is a form of human work that connects us, both as spectators and as practicing participants, with God’s work. If the end of techne is the realization of kosmos, then the practice for and of such work is practice for and of a kind of seeing that is at once contemplative and productive (to play musically, one must hear musically). The requirement that its performance be regular and repetitive is not a matter of efficiency. It is the regularity of ritual. Techne involves the formation not only of an object or artifact but of the participant or performer. Just as the patterns that the weaver weaves emerge along with the surface of the cloth, there is an emergence of order in the craftsman, as motions are repeated, become habitual, or come together harmoniously (like the threads of the woven
cloth). The formation that brings order to light in the craftsman is not merely physical. It can be seen as having the same divine source as the patterns that the weaver brings to light in the cloth, or the harmonies the musician brings to light in the playing.

Just as techne involves more than mere productive labor, \textit{theoria} involves more than mere cognition or detached observation. Both involve what I have called a "realization"—a making visible that allows for active participation in the emergence of \textit{kosmos}. Both are rooted in the seeing (with wondering eyes) of an order that transcends human making. The making that joins craft and contemplation is the "presencing" of the divine.

It is in this sense that the work of craft and of contemplation is meaningful in itself. It is in this sense, too, that \textit{theoria} is (or was) fundamentally liturgical. \textit{Leitourgia} meant "public service" or "work" in the sense, not of production, but of presencing. \textit{Leitourgia} is public \textit{ergon}. Its public nature consists in its being a spectacle in which both performers and spectators, artists and audience, participate. Its work is not a means to an end, or a separate product, but the performance itself. Liturgy is (or was) a making visible that provides for a realization of the divine. The seemingly paradoxical notion of being invisibly present in one's work so that something else can become visible has its source in this original understanding of liturgical work. By making something that is a wonder to behold the musician's work lets \textit{kosmos} appear and thus furnishes the occasion for a kind of seeing that connects us, in a vital way, with God's work.

V.

Since the aim of these reflections has been to arrive at a deeper understanding of the practice of contemplation, it would seem appropriate to draw some practical considerations from them. While anyone but a classicist or a philosopher could be forgiven for having forgotten what \textit{theoria} once meant, more is at stake in our having forgotten what it originally means. Its sources recall us to the original unity of thinking, seeing, wonder, and worship. This idea of \textit{theoria} as a form of worship—as liturgical—prompts further reflection on the idea of a worship service as a theoretical spectacle. The same unease that greets the association of theory and (artistic) performance is often elicited by the idea of performance in public worship. While we expect theory to be non-participatory, or detached, we want worship to be as participatory as possible. To participate is not to be a mere spectator. It is to take part. To ensure participation, we assume, liturgy cannot become a spectacle.

The \textit{theoros} was a spectator—and a participant. If theoretical observation was originally participatory, there must also be a sense in which participation can be observational—a sense in which seeing (or hearing) can itself be a form of worship. The kinds of experience in which the meaning of \textit{theoria} originated should remind us of the difference between passive looking and participatory beholding. The latter is not merely spectatorial, though it does require a spectacle of a certain sort.\textsuperscript{32} The craftsman's work presents a spectacle (\textit{thea}) in which the divine (\textit{thea}) is itself present. As an epiphany of \textit{kosmos} such spectacles allow the spectator to participate in this divine "presencing" just as the theoros was actively and experientially engaged in the realization or making visible of a divine order. A spectacle provides the occasion for this kind of participation when it is "seen with wondering eyes" (\textit{theaomai}) or presents itself as "a wonder to behold" (\textit{thauma idesthai}). That is, when it is beautifully wrought, or well made. It is by virtue of its harmonious composition that any work of art serves as a realization of the divine. The
spectator may not possess the skill necessary to make such a thing—the skill necessary to create *harmonia*—but the possibility of participating in anything more than an entertaining show depends on the craftsman’s ability to do so.

There is, of course, a vital sense in which the joining together of an assembled congregation in the actual making of music—as when a musician accompanies a hymn—is integral to its liturgical function. There is also an important sense in which music that is performed—as when an anthem is sung by a practiced choir—must be selected and presented in a way that invites participatory engagement. The word “accessible” is often used in this context without much thought for what it is that such performances might or might not enable human beings to access, or what the deepest form of participatory engagement is such spectacles might ultimately be. What could it mean to take part? What are we ultimately taking part in? As Schroeder-Sheker observes,

[T]raditions that include the singing of prayers as part of their spiritual praxis hold this in common: if particular sacred music is sung by a prepared community of liturgical singers in the most appropriate way, at some level, heaven and earth are linked.33

Here, I take it, "appropriate" does not simply mean psychologically, culturally, or aesthetically accessible. If "the most appropriate way" is taken to mean the most artful way (in the ancient sense), it is indeed possible to understand how heaven and earth might be practically linked through the liturgical function of music, and why it is so important for the singers to be musically as well as spiritually prepared.34

It is also possible for us to understand why, in Plato’s *Republic*, music plays such an important role in the kind of education that leads to justice, and why, in order to achieve this goal, "we must seek out craftsmen who are . . . able to pursue what is fine and graceful in their work."35 It is because "rhythm and harmony permeate the inner part of the soul more than anything else...so that if someone is properly educated in music . . . it makes him graceful, but if not, then the opposite."36 For Plato, education in music is education by music. It is preparation for a kind of seeing. This is the further reason why such education is "most important":

Because anyone who has been properly educated in music...will sense it acutely when something has been omitted from a thing and when it hasn’t been finely crafted or finely made....And since he has the right distastes, he’ll praise fine things, be pleased by them, receive them into his soul, and, being nurtured by them, become fine and good.37

To "become fine and good," for Plato, is to participate in a vision of the ideal Form of the Good. It is to participate in a vision of *kosmos*. The person who “looks at and studies things that are organized and always the same,” Socrates says, will not simply cognize but "consort with" and "imitate" them. For how can one gaze with admiration at such a spectacle without being moved to imitate what one sees? It is "by consorting with what is ordered and divine," Socrates says, that one "becomes as divine and ordered as a human being can."38 This takes work, in the way that *theoria* and *techne* both take work. It is not a useful result that is produced—a practical accomplishment, in that sense—nor is it a purely theoretical accomplishment, in the modern sense. The function (or *ergon*) of education, as Plato describes it, is the liturgy—the "spectacular work”—of theory. It is also the work of liturgy itself. For, as the Athenian Stranger notes in
Plato’s *Laws*, the effects of even the best education can wear off or be lost altogether—in the same way that the original meanings of words can be lost. It is liturgy that reconnects us with these sources. "The Gods," the Stranger suggests, "took pity on the human race . . . and gave it relief in the form of religious festivals to serve as periods of rest from its labors. They gave us the Muses . . . [B]y having these gods to share their holidays, human beings were to be made whole again, and thanks to them, we find refreshment in the celebration of these festivals."\(^{39}\)

"O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8). Whether one sings these words, or hears them sung, their being sung beautifully should provide for a realization of what they are saying. The psalmist invites us to taste and thus to see. The philosopher invites us to see and thus to pray.\(^{40}\)

**ENDNOTES**


4. The quotation from Anaxagoras (also cited by Pieper) is from Diogenes Laertius, 2. 10–12.


11. It is worth noting here that ancient sources often use theoros to refer to a person who travels to consult an oracle (see McEwen, *Socrates’ Ancestor*, 21, and, e. g., Theognis, *Elegies*, 805). Oracular sayings are not simply informative. They are revelatory, but also notoriously obscure. The illumination they provide is inseparable from the wonder to which they give rise.


13. *Republic* 327a reads: *Kateben chthes eis Peiraia ... hama ten heorten boulomenos theasasthai*.

as the participatory character of spectating in the Ancient Greek theater.


20. As opposed to soma for the non-living body.


26. Speaking of waves (which are ephemeral), McEwen suggests that the "deathless" (and therefore divine) nature of *daidala*, or well-made things, derived partly from the notion that they could always be remade. If they were put together or assembled (as the primary meaning of such *techne*-related terms as *daidalon*, *areros*, and *harmonia* connotes), they could always be put back together. "Like the gods," McEwen writes, "and unlike mortals, [the well-made thing] never entirely disappeared. It was because it was itself a deathless appearing that the well-made, cunningly crafted thing was able to reveal an unseen divine presence"(56). This suggests another way of thinking about the essentially temporal or ephemeral quality of music. Because it is never simply there, or statically present as an object, it is never simply absent in the way that an object might be experienced as being. In that way its ephemerality is a reflection of its deathlessness and an intimation of immortality (it makes immortality as such visible, or audible, as well as teaching us something about what immortality might mean).


30. See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1103a30. One could say that playing musically is what the making of music truly involves, and that there is a real (and important) difference between playing correctly (producing the right notes) and playing musically.

32. See Monoson, *Plato's Democratic Entanglements*, 220. Here Monoson notes that in his famous allegory of the cave "Plato does not use the theatrical [or theoria-related] vocabulary to describe the prisoners viewing the shadows. They are watching a series of images, but they are not depicted as 'spectating' . . . Rather, they only see." It is the philosopher's seeing that is active and participatory. The prisoners are looking passively at something that is a mere image, not a true spectacle.

33. *Transitus* (note 6), 25.

34. "Aristry and fine-tuning," Schroder-Sheker aptly notes, "are spiritual as well as technical metaphors" (*Transitus*, 61). If we are to take the ancient sources seriously, they should not be regarded as mere metaphors. There is an objective reality to "fine-tuning," just as there is to *harmonia* and *eurythmia*.


37. *Republic*, 401e.

38. See *Republic*, 500c.


40. A version of this talk was delivered at the conference, Practicing Catholic: Ritual, Body, and Contestation in Catholic Faith, College of the Holy Cross, October 18–21, 2002. I am grateful to my respondents, particularly Joanna Ziegler, for many helpful comments. I owe deep thanks to Patricia Snyder for teaching me what the making of music truly involves, and why it matters that it be "well-made." I would also like to thank Prof. Paul Minear and Gladys Minear, whose Vermont cottage provided the setting that inspired these thoughts.

Christopher A. Dustin is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Philosophy at the College of the Holy Cross. He studied philosophy at Yale as an undergraduate, and earned his Ph. D., also from Yale, in 1991. He has lectured and published work on the foundations of ethics, ancient philosophy, and the philosophy of art and architecture. His most recent book, co-authored with Joanna Ziegler, is entitled Practicing Mortality: Art, Philosophy and Contemplative Seeing, and is forthcoming from St. Martin's Press. Along with his philosophical pursuits, Professor Dustin is an avid (amateur) musician.