5. The Banality of Music: Cavell's Aesthetic Turn

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> One can [...] conceive of a continuous acoustic flow that traverses the world and embraces even silence. A musician is someone who appropriates something of this flow.
>
> GILLES DELEUZE,
> "Vincennes Session of April 15, 1980, Leibniz Seminar"

1. Prelude

Cavell began life as a musician and came to philosophy because of a vocational crisis. As a composer he felt he was not saying anything with his music. In his autobiography he records one of the first moments where his change of heart dawned on him. Composing a musical arrangement for a production of Shakespeare's *King Lear* at Berkeley, he writes:

> I came not without considerable anxiety, to the first clear inklings, consciously and unforgettably, that I was more interested in the actions and ideas and language of the play, and in learning and understanding what might be said about them and what I thought I had to say about them, than I was in the music in which I expressed what I could of my sense of those actions and ideas in the words [...].[1]

Looking back on that first realization, it is as if that departure were from the start aimed at a return; Cavell's crisis appears in retrospect as a calling to re(dis)cover music in philosophy. Indeed, what he seemed to leave behind becomes the sought

1. Cavell, *Little Did I Know: Excerpts from Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 215.

prize of the battle he waged in his idiosyncratic thought against the philosophical tradition from the start. In 1999, a few years before he drafted his autobiography, the last book he published, in a lecture at Harvard in honor of the music critic, theorist and composer, David Lewin, he wrote:

> Something I have demanded from philosophy was an understanding precisely of what I had sought in music, and in the understanding of music, of what demanded that reclamation of experience, of the capacity for being moved, which called out for, and sustained, an accounting as lucid as the music I loved [...].[2]

So, philosophy replaced music, but it retained for him the aspirations that went into music, and in J.L. Austin's theory of performatives, he envisaged clearly the possibility of a philosophy that satisfied that sensibility. In his work on passionate utterances, he moves towards what we may conceive as his own remarriage, where he gets back together with music, just as in the genre of films he discovered, "a somewhat older pair who are already together past some inner obstacle between them [get] together *again*."[3]

In this paper I want to explore what that remarriage involves. I will follow the intuition that it is his trauma with music that triggers what I want to call the aesthetic turn in his philosophy, which I see enacted not only in his reframing of skepticism — seeing it no longer as an intellectual problem but as an existential task — or in his adoption of Wittgenstein's (and Emerson's and Thoreau's) *descent* to the ordinary, opposing metaphysical abstraction, but also, and most importantly, in his extension of J.L. Austin's theory of performatives to the perlocutionary in passionate utterances. What I am calling his aesthetic turn leads him to forge a space for a new kind of philosophical discourse, not of knowledge but of acknowledgment, where — I will claim — a "musical aesthetic" enters the philosophical equation.

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2. Cavell, *Here and There: Sites of Philosophy*, ed. Nancy Bauer, Alice Crary, and Sandra Laugier (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022), 260.
3. Cavell, *Cities of Words: Pedagogical Letters on a Register of the Moral Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 10.

2. The Trials of Finitude: The Loss and Recovery of Voice

Particularly in its dependence on having or developing an ear for the peculiar soundings of our ordinary words, Austin's focus on performatives constitutes a turn towards the concreteness of sensible experience as constitutive of linguistic meaning, and a first step towards vitalizing speech, infusing feeling into thought, passion into language. Insofar as it zeroes in on the traditionally neglected relation of passion and speech,[4] it opened the way for bringing a musical sensibility into philosophy for Cavell. But whereas Austin seems to succumb to the Enlightenment's prejudice against the aesthetic in taking the expression of desire as merely incidental, for Cavell "the passional side of utterance" is not "a detachable issue."[5] Indeed, as he explains, "from the roots of speech two different paths spring: that of the responsibilities of implication; and that of the rights of desire."[6] And while Austin's performatives offer us "participation in the order of law," Cavell is interested further in the "improvisation in the disorders of desire,"[7] to which passionate utterances invite us. The power of words when it comes to desire no longer resides merely on agreed upon social conventions and pregiven rules, but rather emerges from the richly complex and fluid field of interrelated vital forces in the realm of passion. Desire follows a very different agenda and requires a much greater disposition to vulnerability than reason, often threatening the stability, structure, and security it offers.

Behind the traditional resistance to passion lurks not so much a justified demand for intellectual rigor as perhaps what Cavell calls a terror at the realization that "maybe language (and understanding, and knowledge) rests upon very shaky foundations — a thin net over an abyss)."[8] Once we enter the disorders of desire, we are forced to give up the illusion of control and must rely on our own inner compass in the willingness for change and transformation. So, one must be willing, so to speak, to *play it by ear* despite the uncertainty of the world, and despite the philosopher's traditional

4. Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2005), 156.
5. Ibid., 163.
6. Ibid., 185.
7. Ibid.
8. Cavell, *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 178.

scruples about what is acceptable and serious and what not; one must be disposed "at each point" for the "experience of a conversion, of being turned around."[9]

> Whether an expression is remarkable or casual, where this turns out to be a function of whether we leave the expression ordinary or elevate it into philosophy, [...] depends on escaping our sense, let us say, of the ridiculous [...]. Philosophy [...] turns out to require an understanding of how the seriousness of philosophy's preoccupations... its demand for satisfaction, its refusal of satisfaction — how this seriousness is dependent on disarming our sense of oddness and non-oddness, and therewith seeing why it is with the trivial, or superficial, that this philosophy finds itself in oscillation, as in an unearthly dance.[10]

But we refuse the dance with the trivial, shun the task the ordinary demands from us and recoil to the distraction and protection of skepticism, which, like a shield, saves us from confronting what is before us, afraid that the ordinary will prove too banal, that our expectations will be frustrated.

The risk is most frightening as we move from the order of law to the disorders of desire. We are all quite equal in our knowledge and use of language under conventional conditions; locutionary and even illocutionary uses such as promising, authorizing, betting, bequeathing, endorsing, etc., since they rest on sedimented foundations of social convention and habit, reinforce our sense of control. But the perlocutionary effect of attempts "to convince, amuse, appall, excite, astonish, deter, inspire, etc.," as Cavell observes, requires "further perception and talent both to create and then to judge the effects of our words."[11] But the descent to ordinary language ushers us into the territory of spontaneity and undecidability that demands what Cavell calls "a sense of discovery of the world," a kind of faith and courage before the contingent, without which ordinary language and its examples "would fail in their imagination."[12]

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9. Cavell, *In Quest of the Ordinary: Lines of Scepticism and Romanticism* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 62.
10. Ibid., 166-67.
11. Cavell, *Little Did I Know*, 495.
12. Cavell, *In Quest of the Ordinary*, 162.

The difficulty of that demand together with the indeterminacy of its outcome explains the propensity to disavow the expressiveness of the ordinary, to marginalize or denigrate the aesthetic in our search for philosophical knowledge. We thus make ourselves blind, for example, to the expressiveness of the body so that "we turn [it] [...] into an impenetrable integument [...] [wanting] to place the mind beyond reach, [...] get the body inexpressive"[13] or, in the same vein, we make ourselves deaf to the meaning of our words, by fleeing to metaphysical abstractness where we find the security and safety of well-fixed concepts but end up disconnecting our words from the forms of life where they acquire their meaning, "as if driven," Cavell says, "to some sort of emptiness."[14] It is in that sense, that in their demand to descend to ordinary language both Austin and Wittgenstein provide "ways of outlining the suppression of the voice chronic to philosophy."[15]

We fail in imagination before the ordinary out of fear. Fear of failure or disillusionment, fear of having to acknowledge our frailty and precariousness that in the end deprives us of a voice. Cavell's whole project may be seen as an attempt to dissolve that paralysis, that impulse to emptiness, by quickening the sensibility, cultivating the imagination and the ability to listen, so as to look at things with the same intelligence of a musical ear and attain the insight behind the banality of the ordinary. The mechanisms and dynamics that underlie that compulsive blindness to the natural expressiveness of human nature, its veiled evasion of the vulnerability it entails, in other words: the skeptical impulse, is at the heart of Cavell's philosophy. Indeed, in that light, his discovery of Austin becomes a path towards the recovery in philosophy of the voice he had left behind in his crisis. His extension of Austin into the perlocutionary becomes thus a bridge to the recovery of the human voice: "I have characterized [Austin's] work, along with the practice of the later Wittgenstein, as accomplishing the return of the human voice to philosophy, that is, providing methodical ways of outlining the suppression of voice chronic in philosophy."[16]

Cavell's detailed examination of passionate utterances, his stress on the perlocutionary, provides philosophy the implements to cultivate the ear, the

13. Ibid., 163.
14. Ibid.
15. Cavell, *Here and There*, 248.
16. Ibid.

sensitivity to the human voice it neglects in rejecting the aesthetic density of our words as they modulate sentiment, affect, feeling. Music seeps slowly back into his philosophical thinking in virtue of a turn to the aesthetic.

3. Acknowledgement

The words used in passionate utterances are not constative words, they rely for their meaning not just on their given definitions, nor merely on the set conventions that grant them the power to get things done (baptizing, insulting, promising, etc.). They rely on our powers of improvisation and aesthetic discernment, on the natural spontaneity and resonance of desire that opens its own path. I cannot tell you to *feel* what I am feeling, and then continue our conversation with the same assurance I can if I tell you to hold on to that fork or dial this number. We must build the bridge to make these experiences shareable, to bring you in to see what it is I am talking about. My language, my gestures, my voice must lead you to that feeling, and I will always rely on our mutual attunement, on a shared sensibility, an aesthetic and temperamental confluence for that to be possible. If I want you to see what I see and share what I know, I will have to recreate for you — in my sentences and the experiences to which they appeal, in the words I stress, in their tempo, tone and rhythms even, in my gestures and the associations they suggest and the images they evoke — the same imaginative conditions under which I have experienced the object, the scene, the events I am talking about, and under the particular aspect I am trying to get you to experience them. This happens all the time in what Cavell identifies as the discourse of acknowledgment, where what I am seeking is that you understand how it is with me — not necessarily for you to agree with me, but for you to get me.

In the grammar of the perlocutionary what one means by one's words is calibrated not in propositions, not in meanings, but in the conditions of possibility of the aesthetic.[17] It is the same as what happens with the expressions of aspect-dawning, where suddenly our impression of an object changes even though nothing in the object has changed. As William Day explains,

17. Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After*, 83.

> Knowing in these (moral and aesthetic contexts) doesn't have the shape of a proposition to which is added the appropriate grounding or justifying experience; it has a quite different shape. Knowing here is more like cases of sudden recognition ("I know that face," "I know that move") that can change in a flash every element of one's perception. To express *this* knowledge requires that one give expression to those features or that gesture, to that sight or sound. In that light, [the issue] is not so much about what cannot be said or expressed as about what we mean when we say that we know (or see or hear) something of the sort. […] "Describing one's experience of art is itself a form of art; the burden of describing it is like the burden of producing it."[18]

In passionate utterances we are challenging the other to come closer to us, and we do so always by appealing to their reactions and gauging them against our expectations. We are dealing here with understanding or knowledge that is not propositional but intuitive, empathic, aesthetic. It requires attention to the imponderables that give shape to routes of feeling; it requires a different eye and a better ear than the traditional philosopher's, always attentive to logical connections and consistency and linear reasoning. There is no systematic doctrine nor pre-given criteria, so it involves not so much recognition as an openness to (joint) creativity. It requires what Daniele Lorenzini, following Cavell,[19] characterizes as acknowledgement:

> Acknowledgment is not purely recognitive but creative, and instead of working within the boundaries of a pregiven normative framework, it constitutes an essential condition for the cooperative effort to transform both ourselves (our current identities) and the norms we live by.[20]

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18. William Day, "Words Fail Me. Stanley Cavell's Life out of Music," in *Inheriting Stanley Cavell: Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, ed. David LaRocca (New York: Bloomsbury, 2020), 191.
19. "We think skepticism must mean that we cannot know the world exists, and hence that perhaps there isn't one (a conclusion some profess to admire and others to fear). Whereas what skepticism suggests is that since we cannot know the world exists, its presentness to us cannot be a function of knowing. The world is to be accepted; as the presentness of other minds is not to be known but acknowledged." Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?: A Book of Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 298.
20. Daniele Lorenzini, "Acknowledgment Is Not Recognition: On the Perlocutionary Dimension of Our Normative Practices," in *The Philosophy of Recognition: Expanded Perspectives on a Fundamental Concept*, ed. Matt Congdon and Thomas Khurana (New York: Routledge, forthcoming), 8.

Likewise, Wittgenstein understands propositions of subjective experience, "expressive utterances" (*Äußerungen*) as he calls them, as "reactions in which people find each other,"[21] a field of meaning where intimacy and community can occur, and self-transformation can happen. Passionate utterances are not meant to produce knowledge either, and hence have nothing to do with truth or falsity; over and above reaching agreement or the establishment of truths, they have to do with coming together and making ourselves intelligible to one another. Their purpose is acknowledgement rather than knowledge. Already we are moving away from the objective of traditional philosophical discourse, for instead of shunning the aesthetic or neglecting the emotional and affective, we place it at the center and make it the point.

4. Music and Philosophy

Wittgenstein wrote that "understanding a sentence lies nearer than one thinks to what is ordinarily called understanding a musical theme."[22] Cavell paraphrases him "understanding a sentence is hearing the music that shapes its life,"[23] which he contrasts to the view of language, contested by Wittgenstein, according to which understanding a sentence is knowing the meanings or references of its individual words. He further locates what causes the flight from the ordinary and hence the loss of the human voice in the philosopher's inability or unwillingness "to imagine, to participate in — to hear the music of — the dense contexts within which speech makes its specific sense."[24]

Deaf to that music, the metaphysician de-souls speech in his attempt to understand its meaning outside "the dense contexts within which [it] makes its specific sense,"[25] in other words, outside the language games and forms of life — the whirl of organism – where their music becomes audible. The density here is the density of the bodily, of sentiment, affection, feeling, eros, attraction. Language

21. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), §874.
22. Ibid., §527.
23. Cavell, *Here and There*, 280.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.

without music is language without love. Lovelessness was, after all, something Cavell combatted in the philosophical milieu of his beginnings, particularly.[26] But that battle also becomes the ticket which finally pays his dues to music, the vocation he renounced; a sort of final tribute to the crisis that led him to philosophy, in "a recognition of music [...] as a figure for the mind in its most perfected relation to itself, or to its wishes for itself."[27]

Cavell explicitly links the musical — the capacity to make and appreciate music — "with our caring about finding the right words, developing an ear for what is said when, why it is said, how, and in what context."[28] According to Wittgenstein, we are able to choose and value words because of what he calls "our attachment to our words" (*die Anhänglichkeit an [unsere] Worte*).[29] Without it, they become "cold, lacking in associations," no longer "an acorn from which an *oak tree* can grow."[30] He thus explicitly implicates the bodily as crucial to our ability to recognize a word's "familiar physiognomy," or to feel "that it has taken up its meaning into itself, that it is an actual likeness of its meaning,"[31] all attempts to introduce into our understanding of language an aesthetic dimension in what amounts to an instance of what I am calling Cavell's aesthetic turn, which, by the way, belongs in the constellation of Wittgenstein's interest in seeing aspects.[32]

But Cavell's appeal to the density of the bodily is not a reference to something inexpressible behind the words, as he himself is emphatic in clarifying. The claim in the instance of music is "on the contrary, that expression has (in principle) occurred, in principle perfectly; it is merely the responsibility of each of its recipients to come to terms with his or her experience."[33] That we tend to consider that appeal to the bodily as referring us to the unsayable is another symptom of our prejudice against the aesthetic derived from our representational paradigm, in other words, to the primacy we give to symbolization, that dismisses other ways of knowing and consciousness.

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26. See my "The Finer Weapon: Cavell, Philosophy, and Praise," in *Cavell's Must We Mean What We Say? at 50*, ed. Greg Chase, Juliet Floyd, and Sandra Laugier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 167-78.
27. Cavell, *Here and There,* 260.
28. Ibid., 12.
29. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §218.
30. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 52.
31. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §218.
32. See my "The Bodily Root: Seeing Aspects and Inner Experience," in *Seeing Wittgenstein Anew*, ed. William Day and Victor J. Krebs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 120-39.
33. Cavell, *Here and There*, 254.

We normally suppose the body is psychically mute, "always awaiting the civilizing influence of the thinking mind."[34] But perhaps the mind disabused of the civilizing influence is capable of perceiving that the muteness of the body is not psychically meaningless (that there can be understanding of another sort, without meaning in the representational sense), that it involves not just "a primitive, id-like realm, its crude impulses barely able to cross over from the terra incognita of biology to the meaning-filled world."[35]

Behind this prejudice against the bodily and the aesthetic, as Christoph Cox makes clear, is the belief that experience is always mediated by the symbolic field, which breeds a deep suspicion of the extra symbolic, extra textual, or extra discursive, viewing such a domain as either inaccessible or non-existent. But this is nothing other than

> a provincial and chauvinistic anthropocentrism [...], for it treats human symbolic interaction as a unique and privileged endowment from which the rest of nature is excluded. [...] human beings inhabit a privileged ontological position elevated above the natural world. [This] manifests a problematic Kantian epistemology and ontology, a dualistic program that divides the world into two domains, a phenomenal domain of symbolic discourse that marks the limits of the knowable, and a noumenal domain of nature and materiality that excludes knowledge and intelligible discourse.[36]

We are touching, however, not an unsayable realm but the point of emergence of ever new words seeking understanding. The issue is not what is unsayable but what kind of knowing is still possible beyond the words. The body in its particular vitality and modulation is the ground from which words with an understanding outside the realm of symbolization can emerge, interminably. The permanent effort to make oneself intelligible to the other, especially in passionate utterances, where we seek both understanding and acknowledgement amidst the intense complexity and

34. Adam Blum, Peter Goldberg, and Michael Levin, *Here I'm Alive: The Spirit of Music in Psychoanalysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2023), 4.
35. Ibid., 4.
36. Christoph Cox, "Beyond Representation and Signification: Toward a Sonic Materialism," *Journal of Visual Culture* 10, no. 2 (2011): 147.

unpredictability of the erotic that lines all our utterances, depends on opening a space of reflection around the body. Perhaps, as Blum, Goldberg and Levin suggest, the body does "speak" (and is spoken to) "in a register involving the patterning of sensation rather than pictorial or symbolic thought [which] would mean that the body is given psychical organization only secondarily by phantasy or thought or language, all the while organizing itself primarily according to a shared pattern of sensory, somatic organization."[37]

What we have been calling Cavell's return to music involves a revisioning of the presuppositions of philosophical thought, what I have called an aesthetic turn, that involves the deepening of the move to ordinary language into a non-representational perspective: "No longer to give a central place to symbolization and figuration but to "nonrepresented (or simply presented) types of experience and communication that are centered on the vicissitudes of attention, sensory perception, and psychophysical phenomena."[38]

Instead of talking of music as a language without meaning, as Levi-Strauss does, Cavell talks about music as a system of communication that involves *an understanding* without meaning. He thus liberates the musical from the requirements of symbolization that would turn it into something mute or empty, and instead introduces an understanding that "is endless, in which everything that happens is to be taken as significant, and nothing does, or need come, as an isolated or incontestable meaning."[39] It is not surprising that Cavell considers "Wittgenstein's invoking the understanding of a musical theme as a guide to philosophical understanding, [...] call it the promise of an understanding without meanings, [...] a utopian glimpse of a new or undiscovered relation to language, to its sources in the world, to its means of expression."[40]

6. Coda

In the move towards understanding without meaning, Cavell is making a gesture towards bringing the non-representational dimension of the musical into the

37. Blum, Goldberg, and Levin, *Here I'm Alive*, 4.
38. Ibid.
39. Cavell, *Here and There*, 253.
40. Ibid., 261

philosophical understanding of language. Of course, where language is conceived as representation or its signifying powers as related to a correlationism between thinking and being, this attempt to bring in the testimonial, living presence of words, their embeddedness in the vitality of forms of life, may seem to fall outside the "province of a study of language as such"[41] because they can be performed even without saying anything, or if they are performed by saying something, they often need non-linguistic "help" to be successful.[42]

But perhaps rather than rule it out, we must revise our conception of language.

Taking a similar aesthetic turn in psychoanalysis as the one we have been attributing to Cavell in philosophy, Adam Blum, Peter Goldberg and Michael Levin point out that, although we have lacked "an adequate language to describe the elaborate and evolved ways in which this sentient body is organized, the ways in which the semiotics of movement and patterning of sensation shape the nonrepresentational domain of lived experience," perhaps music, "something that is so fundamental to our sense of meaning and being in the world yet so independent of words for the way it orders our experience" can help us imagine this.[43]

Of course, standing against that suggestion is the belief that meaning is a conscious, intellectual, linguistic human creation. But if we take Wittgenstein's words: "What has to be accepted, the given is — so one could say — forms of life,"[44] not as referring merely to shared beliefs and opinions, but also to our mutual attunement in natural reactions, in our words as extensions of the body and gestures,[45] then perhaps we can broaden our conception of language to a system of communication, as Cavell does, in order to introduce the notion of understanding without meaning [46] that liberates us from the all-embracing and constraining linguistic turn and its exclusive understanding *with* meaning.

In that line, Jonathan Lear, for example, suggests that we need to further elaborate forms of life to include "archaic meaning."[47] The archaic mode of thought or

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41. Jennifer Hornsby, "Illocution and Its Significance," in *Foundations of Speech Act Theory: Philosophical and Linguistic Perspectives*, ed. S.L. Tsohatzidis (New York: Routledge, 1994), 195.
42. Lorenzini, "Acknowledgment Is Not Recognition," 9.
43. Blum, Goldberg, and Levin, *Here I'm Alive*, 4-5.
44. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §226.
45. Ibid., §241-42.
46. Cavell, *Here and There,* 252
47. Jonathan Lear, *Love and its Place in Nature: A Philosophical Interpretation of Freudian Psychoanalysis* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 192.

consciousness Lear is talking about may be assimilated, in our present context, with the musicality behind words, the presentational (musical) dimension of existence and consciousness. May it not be a shared pattern of sensory, somatic organization that constitutes the space wherein intelligibility is forged outside or beyond or before entering the realm of representational thought?

Underlying Cavell's philosophy there is a vision of human being split between two worlds, the world we think and the world we live in; of being suspended between the sensible and the intelligible, where the whole philosophical enterprise is conceived as an attempt to deal with that dichotomy, as he suggests in "Knowing and Acknowledging,"

> not as if the problem is for opposed positions to be reconciled, but for the halves of the mind to go back together. This ambition frequently comes to grief. But it provides the particular satisfaction, as well as the particular anguish, of a particular activity of philosophizing.[48]

That particular anguish is ineluctable once we take seriously our paradoxical human nature, which leaves us with the question Cavell asks about the relation between the words with which we try to word our experience with music and the experience music provides us: "If we say that they are the afterlife of such work, two questions arise. What if the experience has passed us by, as surely it sometimes will, on a given performance? And what if this is the only afterlife we are given to know?"[49] Words or music? Which goes first? What can we miss? Radical undecidability, living with our limitation. A place of finitude, of mourning and flight. A philosophy that straddles between music and words, unable to pledge absolute fealty to either or pledging it to both. Always in tension, pressed by the demand of a knowledge that comes to light with language but cannot be fulfilled within it.

Philosophical discourse is thus relocated, to make us aware of our obliviousness to our own voice and our chronic inclination to get lost in our words, to teach us to live "with the sign of our finitude."[50] We are reminded again of the

48. Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?*, 223.
49. Cavell, *Here and There,* 286.
50. Cavell, personal communication (1999).

description from the comedies or remarriage, where "a somewhat older pair who are already together past some inner obstacle between them [get] together *again*."[51] For what we witness is a remarriage of philosophy and music that matures the banal to trigger an understanding, a knowledge that is irreducible to theoretical concepts, an acknowledgement that lifts the repression of the human voice. Once the prejudice against the aesthetic is diagnosed, its recovery becomes the task, and music and art become the place to explore our passion and desire to "show, or remind us, or expand our horizons, so that we see, or remember, or learn, what truly matters to us."[52]

51. Cavell, *Cities of Words,* 10.
52. Cavell. *Here and There*, 277.