"Now the doubt whether an object of our inner ideas and general outlook is or is not, like the question whether subjective consciousness has generated it in itself and whether the manner and mode in which it has brought it before itself was also in correspondence with the object in its essential nature, is precisely what arouses in men the higher scientific need which demands that, even if we have a notion that an object is or that there is such an object, nevertheless the object must be exhibited or proved in accordance with its necessity" (G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, trans. Knox, O.U.P., v.I, p.24).

This is the general recognition of the true. It is a more inward statement of that insight of the ancients that all men by nature desire to know. It is more inward in the sense that it allows the other than the true its place. It is bound up with the possibility of the appearance: that which is at the heart of the beautiful - as the true which can be whole in appearance. It is the relation between these moments - the true and the beautiful which makes crucial for Hegel that art has that which comes before it and that which comes after. Nature, the before, is that appearance which is recognized as true only in the whole of its being - not in any appearance itself. Religion, the after, is subjective wholeness which no longer finds appearance adequate. Philosophy is the unity of the objectivity of the beautiful and the subjectivity of religion.

This edition of *Animus* presents the tensions of this before and after in relation to art. The first paper, by Paul Epstein, centres on the vision of the ideal in the natural and the state which must be sorted out within the Greek *polis*. The result is the very subjectivity which grounds our problem, truth as appearance. It is a separating out of the before and after of art. Put in the terms of Aristophanes' play, the natural involves the every day of things and our particularity, the religious and theoretical is brought to life in the limit of the tragic to the transcendent only, coupled with the ability of comedy to treat of the whole: the divine life and the actual life of the spectators; to bring about the individual as against the particular; and to unite the gods of marriage generative with the god of oblivion and judgement. The argument is that once one has seen such a unity one has already entered into a philosophy of art. Aristotle, as what is after art, is already implied.

The second, an essay by Sean McGrath, calls for art to take up only the middle ground, suggesting that in technology neither the truly natural before nor the freely thoughtful after can maintain themselves. Necessary is Heidegger's direct appeal to the danger and an aesthetic - an apparent, or counterfeit - return to the sensibilities within medieval contemplation. In answer to this hiding which fits the danger is the vision of a technology of explicit limits, allowing deeper possibilities.
Following what could be viewed as a subjective withdrawal from modernism in Heideggerian thinking we have Jennifer Dyer’s fascinating presentation of an objective rage. If Heidegger takes up a religious inwardness Francis Bacon makes appear a philosophical objectivity which suffers and yet constructs our impatient ever relative and gliding studies for our own portraits. The appearance is so fraught because at its heart is the glimpsed freedom of that same concrete individual proposed in Aristotle and Aristophanes. But now the glimpsing is an act within the portrait, not something we see but which we might be seeing seen. Is this the complete observer which Nietzsche saw with interest and Heidegger saw with horror? Or is it a deeper individuality and freedom and a deepening too of aesthetic indifference.

Oddly enough these questions are most explicitly raised in this issue not in relation to the most recent art works but in a consideration belonging to Hegel's own time and indeed to his own circle. Is Goethe arguing in Faust that poetry is the highest expression of truth in the modern age? At stake in the essay by Kenneth Kierans is the life of Faust as true individual as against the “seeing” (as in Francis Bacon) of Mephistopheles and God, a seeing which we can only watch as unified for us or for Faust - either way something seems to have been lost. And at stake in this self conscious poetics: is poetry as the unity of the beautiful of appearance not simply to be worshipped - the “after” which Hegel argues is in a certain way inevitable - or also, in Kierans' terms, is it to be judged: "A work of art invites us to intellectual activity, and this not for the sake of creating more art, but for the purpose of knowing what art is and what its limits are." Art may be created anew if only to think through in another way the beauty of true thought as part of its very necessity.