In the previous, empirical chapter, it was discovered that art works by means of intrapellation. This conclusion was proposed as a conclusion of general validity: if one has an aesthetic experience it is because one has had an experience of intrapellation. It was also realized that the act of intrapellation builds on several general characteristics and conditions of aesthetic experience. In this chapter, these findings will be discussed in relation to structures for subjectivity and traditional objects of aesthetics. The overarching theme is the validity of aesthetic experience as intrapellation – aesthetic experience qua experience – as a challenge to aesthetic theory. In this regard, validity is temporal, dynamic, open-ended, and without absolutes. It is neither fully transparent nor completely opaque, and emerges through the development of concepts and theories that are intersubjectively convincing. With validity, as Merleau-Ponty argues in regards to perception, perspectives blend and coincide. Validity is dependent on the strength of the relation of the findings to the theoretical and empirical.

The results of the empirical study showed that the first aesthetic encounter is one of intense personal interest, an interest which is characterized by affection. Although affect cannot be reduced to the body, the first aesthetic encounter is characterized body ambiguity and includes the body as an affective presentation. It contains subject-object ambiguity and, as such, time and space ambiguity. It is an open meeting with something new and unexpected, a meeting which resonates as compelling and convincing, yet is largely pre-reflective. Differently, the retrospective interpretation is one of reflection, but appropriates many of the same characteristics as the first aesthetic encounter. As such, it is characterized by open inquiry and by affection. The retrospective interpretations also reveal that the work of art becomes most reflectively meaningful in the more immediate time after experiencing it, and the work of art appears through intuitive reflection rather than formal reflection. The retrospective interpretation also reveals art as expanding self-understanding, and understanding the work of art is a dialectical process through which the work becomes internal to the subjectivity.
Beyond these characteristics, the retrospective interpretation shows that aesthetic experience does not have one particular meaning but many. It is in marked contrast to everyday experience, laden with radiant meaning or fraught with significance. Full of meaningful reassurance, it intensely and significantly reveals other minds and other world views, showing one’s own world and one’s own view as one among many. One’s world is but one perspective, wherein truth has become complex. Easy answers are therefore no longer an option, possibly leading to “rebellious subjectivities,” who do not accept simple solutions being handed to them. At the same time, the horizons of expectation reveal that a certain degree of harmony between the work and the expectations of the work is a necessary condition for the experience of a first aesthetic encounter. That a degree of harmony is necessary means that the work of art cannot be too radical in its newness, as it will be rejected as a possibility for an aesthetic encounter. Yet, the newness can be given a new framework for understanding in that the horizons of expectation change when the experiential conditions change. Finally, the horizons of expectations reveal the first aesthetic meeting as extending structures of subjectivity.

All these characteristics described above inform the conclusion that aesthetic experience functions by means of intrapellation. The claim based on the empirical chapter is this: if an aesthetic experience takes place, these characteristics are present (besides the one of the retrospective interpretation where aesthetic experience has many meanings). The characteristics cannot be detected in all the interviews, but they have the possibility of being present in all of them. There is nothing in the interviews which contradicts that they could be present. It appears, however, as though there are individual variations in respect to the intrapellation where different experiential dimensions take the foreground dependent on the individual and the work in question.

Nevertheless, these characteristics together do not give a complete account of aesthetic experience. The characteristics are necessary conditions, but they are not sufficient in the sense that they do not distinguish aesthetic experience from all other experiences; they are not exhaustive. For instance, why can an experience of another human with projection and introjection, as psychoanalysis proposes, not be an instance of intrapellation? What is the particular content of art that generate intrapellation? No accurate answer can be given based on the empirical material and the theoretical review, and this book is a part of the continuous delineation of aesthetic experiences in relation to the art phenomenon. Perhaps what distinguishes aesthetic experience from other experiences is the lack of a gaze that looks directly back. Art only represents, perhaps gratefully so, an indirect other, possibly leading to a different degree of freedom, which is nevertheless also present in the apparent lack of external demands and