Kant thinks an important connection exists between the conduct of one's life and whether one appreciates the beauties of art and nature. John Cage says he wants to act in the gap between art and life. Heidegger urges us to remember Hölderlin's "Poetically, man dwells." Dewey claims that an important continuum exists from the experience of the live creature in the environment to the experience of art. Nietzsche tells us that were it not for art we would die of truth, and asserts, in language he later regretted, that life is only justified as an aesthetic phenomenon.

Certainly it is difficult to think about art without sensing that art somehow discloses something significant about the conduct of human life. Yet, the precise nature of the connection between art and life has never been fully articulated. Part of the reason why the connection has not been understood is because the nature of art and the lived reality of artistic creativity have not been fully understood. We use the word "art" to talk about both the activity of making something and that which is created. And the literal meaning of "art" supports this usage. Literally and properly, art means "a way of doing things," and never merely "artifact" or "art object." For the purposes of understanding artistic creativity and the nature of the work of art, as propaedeutic to articulating the connection between art and life, it is important to pay attention to the literal meaning. As I shall show, the work of art is, strictly speaking, not merely an object, but the exhibition or making...
present of the way of doing things. What comes to presence as the work of art is the lived reality of artistic creativity: the realization and achievement of freedom. The connection between art and life can be expressed in the following preliminary way: the meaning of art is the meaning of human life. To understand, therefore, the way of doing things is to understand how life can become art, how the meaning of art is the meaning of human life.

In section I, I begin to unfold the way of doing things by summarizing some of my work on the nature of artistic creativity and the work of art. Implicit in the summary and analysis is the recognition that artistic creativity is a form of human freedom. In sections II, III, and IV artistic freedom will be elucidated in part by a contrast with a hedonistic and nihilistic understanding of freedom. This contrast arises from an analytical reconstruction of and an attempt to think beyond Nietzsche's attack on hedonism and his attempt to overcome nihilism. In section V, I try to think beyond one side of Nietzsche's understanding of freedom as the will to power by explicating how creative will is grounded in creative silence. By analyzing an ambiguity in Heidegger's concept of resoluteness and appropriating the clarification, section VI gives more positive content to artistic freedom. And section VII and the conclusion, on the basis of what I uncover in the attempts to think beyond Nietzsche, clarify the connection between art and life and complete Nietzsche's attempt to overcome nihilism.

Freedom is a task; its condition is finitude, its awakening occurs in creative silence and its expression is the vigorous, open, and serenely joyful activity of overcoming. Freedom is not to be understood voluntaristically as choice or willful domination, but as the silent mastery of finitude.

In order to fully elucidate the lived experience of artistic creativity, the important difference between creative problem solving and creative performance must be understood. I shall argue that all artistic creativity is fundamentally creative performance and that whenever problem solving occurs, as it must, it should always be seen as in the service of creative performance.¹

The most obvious examples of creative performance come from the performing arts, where the creative artist is not the originator of the work of art, but its performer. Since we commonly distinguish between creative or inspired performances and well executed but poor performances, we can see that all performances of the same work are not on an equal footing. The difference between an inspired and