

## Apparition

The artwork as appearance is most closely resembled by the apparition, the heavenly vision. Artworks stand tacitly in accord with it as it rises above human beings and is carried beyond their intentions and the world of things.

Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*

On the summit of a remote mountain, I turn off all my lights and take in the star-speckled night sky. After a while I try scanning for Polaris and the Big Dipper. Yet while it so happens that these lights are visible here and now, many of them have died out long ago. Conversely, light from countless other stars have yet to reach us.

It occurs to me that the stars in the sky are a lot like the protons that make up a photograph.

A star is born, and suddenly its light replaces utter darkness. An *apparition*. Only those who take the time to look at the sky ever have a chance to stand witness to such an event. These magical moments occur in photography as well, or so I sometimes believe.

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