

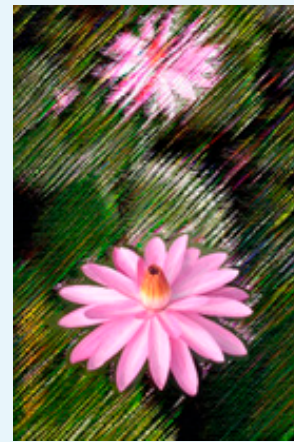
A Thing of Beauty is a Joy for Ever

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1. Introduction

According to Webster's dictionary "Beauty is the quality attributed to whatever pleases or satisfies the senses or mind as by line, color, form, texture, proportion, rhythmic motion, tone etc; or any very attractive feature". Beauty is the quality that gives pleasure to the mind or senses and is associated with such properties as harmony of form or color, excellence of artistry, truthfulness and originality. According to Confucius "Everything has beauty but not every one sees it". "To love beauty is to see light" is the statement made by Victor Hugo. Ralph Waldo Emerson said "The love of beauty is taste. The creation of beauty is art". Rabindranath Tagore said, "Beauty is in the ideal of perfect harmony which is in the universal being; truth the perfect comprehension of the universal mind".

Beautiful things always attract us. There is an inherent sense of good feeling when we experience something beautiful. The sense of feeling good mostly depends on the viewer's experience, imagination, belief, gender, etc. A creation that is acclaimed by general viewers as a beautiful piece of art may not be necessarily acceptable to the judges and critics (say, in a Photographic Salon or Art competition). However, we humans have some common instincts, experiences and expectations; hence some things are commonly held to be beautiful by most of the people and always prove to be a source of enjoyment.



Biswatosh Sengupta



Temple Sculpture

Pan Indian philosophical definition of the Supreme is very simple -'Satyam Shivam Sundaram'. 'Sat' is the true value, 'Shiv' is the good value, 'Sundaram' is the beauty value. This value system is the foundation of Indian Aesthetics. According to the Indian aesthetic theory, Man is a miniature divine being. He embarks into a journey of creativity through the process of Education, Experience and Practice. This journey of aesthetics is a devotional journey towards Ultimate Reality with the sole purpose of merging with the Supreme! The Indian Art is idealistic, mystic, symbolic and transcendental. The Indian artist is both Priest and Poet.

'A thing of beauty is a joy forever'. In this famous opening line from Endymion, Keats speaks about the everlasting quality of beauty. Beauty, in whatever form it may be found, is an eternal joy to humans, because it offers humans the constant opportunity to reflect on that beauty, which stands in such stark comparison to the monotony and ugliness of our everyday lives. In spite of all the difficulties and the sufferings that humans face, beauty has the ability to produce happiness and temporarily shift the burdens humans bear. "Beauty" for Keats, both includes physical objects which are examples of natural beauty such as daffodils, but also beauty that can be found in art, such as "the lovely tales we have heard or read." All of these forms of beauty act as "an endless fountain of immortal drink," allowing humans to forget bleak reality and experience joy. Keats tells his readers that beauty continues on even when it can't be seen by the naked eye. People just need to realize true beauty and capture it in memories, paintings, sculptures, poems and songs, photographs, and through other means.

Beauty of Taj Mahal or that of Niagara Falls or the Kanchanjunga is always joy forever. Masterpieces like 'Birth of Venus' (1486) by Sandro Botticelli, 'Madonna' (1505) by Raphael, 'Mona Lisa' (1503) by Leonardo da Vinci, 'Valpincon Bather' (1808) by Ingres. or 'Starry Night' (1889) by Van Gogh are only a few examples of creative beauty which are objects of joy forever. A creative art irrespective of any medium provides an equal aesthetic pleasure and thus both the process and the product of all mediums are equally enjoyable. All forms of visual art require an artist to create his work by copying from life and nature and or from his creative imagination.



2. Beautiful Nature

Wonderful Nature is an integral part of our lives. Nature is the greatest storehouse of beauty. The countless objects of Nature are things of beauty that are joy forever. Nature has myriad facets. It keeps changing from time to time. Man has always tried to appreciate the beauties of nature and



Partha Sarathi Sarkar

portray her mysteries with intuition (Prativa) and creative imagination. The pristine beauty of the splashing water of the roaring sea at the Vivekananda rock temple , the grandeurs of the Himalayas with its colorful hue, the rugged Aravallis, the lush green valleys of the Nilgiris, the fantastic natural scenes at Kailash Manas Sarobar, the charms of the mountain desert at Ladakh, the colorful beauties at the Valley of Flowers, the awe-inspiring depths of the Grand Canyon, the magnificence of the Niagara falls, the 'Moonlit Sonata' at the Alps, the starlit night at the sea beach and ripples at the sand dunes, have attracted and inspired humanity since eternity. The beauty of nature has been extolled in the works of poets

and artists throughout the world. When Wordsworth describes the daffodils dancing in the breeze or when our eyes alight on a painting by William Turner; our hearts are filled with an indescribable emotion. Indeed, Nature is the manifestation of the Truth and Beauty of God.

3. Beauty, Art and Aesthetics

Life is beautiful and interesting. Since the dawn of civilization man has been interested in mystery of creation and has found pleasure in aesthetics. Mankind appreciated all that was beautiful in nature and felt an urge to create a beauty through imitation and imagination. Moreover, imagination opts for expression and expression takes place through any medium or avenue.



Benu

3.1 Beauty

Beauty is considered as a significant part in case of any artistic creation. Beauty in terms of art refers to an interaction between



Alexander of Antiochia:
Venus of Milo

line, color, texture, sound, shape, motion, and size that is pleasing to the senses. A pretty face or figure of a woman; bounty of flora and fauna of this beautiful nature with its varied appearances in different time and seasons; flowers, birds, butterflies etc. are accepted as universal beauty. Sometime even simple things like leafless trees, broken glass, a colorful texture, an abandoned building may all become a beautiful object of visual art.

3.2 Art

According to J. Reyland 'Art has beauty for its objects'. Most of the painters and photographers would agree that they are in pursuit of beauty even though they may not all appreciate equally an object as beautiful. Yet beauty is an inseparable aspect from art as art cannot be void of beauty.

Art is a creative process. It originates in a sensitive human soul which cannot help communicating to others what has been seen, heard and felt. The Artist selects a subject, eliminates from it what he considers redundant and adds to it what he feels should be essential to complete a meaning of a picture.

When the job is complete the subject acquires a new look, a new meaning and, last but not the least, a beauty which has so long remained unnoticed. The common place becomes uncommon because it has taken up the hue. Of the artist's mind the artist has created something new and beautiful from what already exists not by coping it, not by reproducing it but by rearranging it and by holding it in a new perspective. Essentially, therefore, Art is a process of re-creation, distinguished from reproduction, which has a spiritual rather than material end in view providing aesthetic pleasure. Aesthetics plays a vital role in this context. It is central to any exploration of art.



3.3 Aesthetics



Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres:
The bather of Valpinçon

The word "aesthetic" is derived from the Greek word "aisthetikos," meaning "esthetic, sensitive, or sentient". Aesthetics (also spelled esthetics) is a branch of philosophy dealing with the nature of beauty, art, and taste, and with the creation and appreciation of beauty. It is more scientifically defined as the study of sensory or sensory-emotional values, sometimes called judgment of sentiment and taste. More broadly, scholars in the field define aesthetics as 'critical reflection on art, culture and nature.' Aesthetics is a sub discipline of axiology, a branch of philosophy, and is closely associated with the philosophy of art. Aesthetic studies are new ways of seeing and of perceiving the world. Aesthetics is mainly concerned with the perception and sense of beauty. For Immanuel Kant, the aesthetic experience of beauty is a judgment of a subjective, but common, human truth.



Leonardo da Vinci: Mona Lisa

4. Conclusion

Any field of Art plays a very significant role in elevating man's innovative ideas, aesthetic awareness and creative pursuit. Visual Arts provide an overall satisfaction and nourishment of the



Cimabue: Virgin and Child Enthroned

mental faculties. Art can be aptly described as the 'Sap and Blood' of human civilization as well as human life. The wheel of life can run smoothly with the inspiration and aspiration by art. We delight at the aesthetics of the visual arts be it painting or photography utilizing the elements of this mundane world inspired by the beauties of Nature. It should be remembered that whatever may be the medium the ultimate product is an art provided the man behind the product is an artist, who has sense of aesthetic visualization and ability to convey his own feeling in a new look. We must remember that 'Beauty is truth and Truth is Beauty'. 'Satym Shivam Sundaram' is the main philosophy of Indian Art. Let us enjoy the beauties of this diverse Nature through Creative

Process as a form of Visual Art and sublimity to life. Let the "Things of Beauty" always continue to bring pleasure, peace, tranquility, harmony and joy in our life.



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