

PROJECT BEAUTY



Beauty

Yasuhiko Genku Kimura
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*Through beauty alone man will gradually become
consciously aware of his oneness with the Light.*
—Walter Russell

BEAUTY

Beauty is perceived as the structural integrity of wholeness in the world of appearance. The experience of beauty is evoked by the integrity, wholeness, and harmony that exists in the primary creations of the universe in nature, which we humans recreate (create anew) with our imagination in an infinite variety of forms and ways through our secondary creations (artistic creations) by integrating truth, goodness, and love into a whole.

The experience of beauty heals fragmentation and restores wholeness within. The oft-repeated adage that “beauty is in the eye of the beholder” has a deeper dimension of meaning. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder not because it is merely a matter of subjectivity but because the more open one’s vision of beauty is, the more beauty one can behold. And vice versa: the more exposed one is to beauty, the more open one’s vision is to beauty. Beauty is of appearance and appearance is of reality. Therefore, the more open one’s vision is to beauty, the more of reality’s depth one is able to perceive.

In *The Nature of Order*, the architect-cosmologist Christopher Alexander demonstrates with example after example that beauty or wholeness is not merely a subjective or relative preference but an objective (or intersubjective) and communicable universal value. What is beautiful to you is beautiful to me if we are both attuned to our sense of wholeness and integrity. The experience of beauty is thus the harmonic resonance of the inner wholeness of the beholder and the interior wholeness of the object of beauty.

Beauty is not limited to the arts and music. The scientist J.W.N. Sullivan has the following to say:

Since the primary object of the scientific theory is to express the harmonics which is found to exist in nature, we see at once that these theories must have an aesthetic value. The measure of the success of a scientific theory is, in fact, a measure of its aesthetic value, since it is a measure of the extent to which it has introduced harmony in what was before chaos.

It is in its aesthetic value that the justification of the scientific theory is to be found, and with it the justification of the scientific method. Since facts without laws would be of no interest, and laws without theories would have, at most, only a practical utility, we see that the motives which guide the scientists are, from the beginning, manifestations of the aesthetic impulse. The measure in which science falls short of art is the measure in which it is incomplete as science.

The evolution of consciousness involves the process of perceiving increasingly greater wholeness and beauty. In the perception of ever greater wholeness and beauty, we come to realize ever deeper truth. Beauty is the inner splendor of truth. Truth is the inner accord of beauty. Thus, the English poet Keats writes:

*Beauty is truth,
Truth beauty — that is all Ye know on earth,
And all ye need to know.*

The mathematical physicist Hermann Weyl's following statement expresses the paramount importance of beauty as a guiding principle in scientific research:

My work always tried to unite the true with the beautiful; but when I had to choose one or the other, I usually chose the beautiful.

Hermann Weyl once formulated a theory of gravitation but became aware that his theory was not true as a theory of gravitation according to the prevalent understanding of that time. Yet, the theory was so mathematically beautiful that he did not wish to abandon it. He thus kept it alive solely for the sake of its beauty. Then, when there came a new development in physics known as quantum electrodynamics, it turned out that his aesthetic sensibility was right.

In a different instance, Hermann Weyl developed another original mathematical equation in the field of quantum mechanics. Other physicists ignored or dismissed his equation for nearly thirty years, because it violated the accepted view, while he kept it alive solely because of its aesthetic value. And again, it turned out that his aesthetic sensibility was right.

Beauty thus is a supreme guiding principle that serves in the development of knowledge and in the evolution of thought. Beauty is also a supreme guiding principle in the development of ethics and of an ethical community.

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Ethics, as the science of right human comportment, has its sanction in the knowledge of reality: to live an ethical life and to create an ethical community means to think beautiful thoughts and enact beautiful actions towards one another within the community. An ethical life indeed qualifies as a beautiful work of art, and an ethical community is a beautiful architecture of human organization in which art, science, and technology, and hence culture and civilization, flourish.

Aristotle called the beauty contained in and expressed through ethical human comportment *kalon*, often translated as noble or honorable (while sometimes mistranslated as the beautiful in the sheer physical sense. The *kalon* signifies the ethically beautiful and expresses a philosophical aesthetics. (References to *kalon* are found in both Aristotle's *Eudemian Ethics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*.) Thus, the idea of beauty as an ethical conception is not new.

Beauty bears sensate witness to the sacred, which is the refulgence of wholeness, that is fundamentally irreducible to linear logical intellectualization. Thus, the more you behold the sacred, the more beauty

you perceive. The more beauty you perceive, the more sacred your lifeworld becomes. The more sacred your lifeworld becomes, the more happiness and joy you experience. Therefore, supreme beauty brings supreme happiness—beatitude.

As ethics is the art and science of defining a set of universal principles that makes individual happiness possible, it is evident that the experience of supreme beauty, which leads to the experience of beatitude, is a supreme principle of ethics.

From this perspective, we can characterize that fear and guilt, evil and sin, disease and suffering, are all unethical thoughts, emotions, and conditions, because they cause unhappiness and misery, while ethics consists of a set of principles and practices designed to produce happiness.

Those thoughts, emotions, and conditions are analogous to darkness. Darkness is the absence of light. Absence by definition is non-existent. We cannot directly deal with that which is absent, that which is non-existent. To dispel darkness therefore does not mean to decrease the darkness that is absent but to increase the light that is present.

Freedom from fear and guilt, evil and sin, or chronic disease and suffering means that we realize their essential absence, their essential nonexistence, *in reality*. The freedom means that we increase the light of our awareness in the wholeness of being to bear witness to the sacred, the whole, and the beautiful. It is to live our life guided by the sacred and the beautiful, and by wholeness, integrity, and harmony. Such a life guided by beauty and wholeness is indeed an ethical life in the truest sense of the word.

An ethical life guided by wholeness and beauty is marked by integrity in thought and action. It is life as lived as Project Beauty, which is characterized by the ever-growing presence of beauty, wholeness, and integrity in thought and action.

Similarly, an ethical community guided by wholeness and beauty is characterized by the ever-growing presence of integrity and harmony in thought and action. Therefore, to create and develop an ethical community means to conceive of the development of our community as Project Beauty.

Project Beauty means living an individual and collective life as an evolutionary project with beauty as its guiding principle.

Beauty attracts; ugliness repels. That which attracts is beauty; that which repels is ugliness. The more beauty, the more wholeness and integrity, we develop within and without, the more we attract like-minded people who (want to) live their lives as we do—as a unique expression of Project Beauty.

Because evolution is an open-ended process of learning that brings ever-greater wholeness and beauty to the evolutionary process itself and its environment, to take on Project Beauty as our lifetime project means to live in accordance with the evolutionary thrust of life itself. In living such a life, we achieve freedom from fear and guilt, evil and sin, disease and suffering, because we achieve freedom itself.

Project Beauty is a new approach for the liberation of humanity from the tethers of fear and guilt, and disease and suffering, and as such for the ethical evolution of the world. It is not a moribund problem-solution-problem-solution approach, nor is it a worn-out paradigmatic attempt at solving psychological problems. And it is not an external project of creating a “better” world, which is a form of reaction to the past, the terms of which are always dictated by the past.

With Project Beauty, what we intend to create is not a better world but a New World that is adorned by beauty and enlivened by wholeness. The New World that we create is a free and creative expression of our aligned vision, a free and creative expression of the singular cosmic destinies that we all are. Thus, our individual and collective action will be an expression of our shared vision. Our thought and action will be wholeness expressing itself through us in the creation of ever-greater beauty. Our thought and action will be primary creation unfolding itself through us in the attainment of ever-greater perfection.

In Project Beauty, what inspires us is our highest vision and deepest passion. Therefore, we can sustain our action in the face of all the obstacles that will surely come our way. Ceaselessly, beauty will inspire us to ever-greater heights and scopes of beauty. Ceaselessly, we will aspire to ever-greater creation and expression of beauty. Fear and guilt will be no more, because they are indeed nothing. We will be free, because freedom is the very spirit of beauty.

*Beauty will we see in all things.
From all that is unlovely will our vision be immune.
—Walter Russell*

The cover design “Beauty” is by Mira Joy Vivant, one of the 27 paintings that constitute AWARENESS ART—a multisensory-experience exhibition of visual art, music, textile, fragrance, and confection, covering all senses of our experience in the phenomenal world, created for the purpose of elevating human consciousness to its higher reaches.