

Is there such a thing as an Aesthetic Mind? Do you have one?

There is the animal mind of the body, the unconscious or reactive mind, the thinking analytical mind, and many claim there to be a spiritual mind, but is there also the separate mind of artist – the *aesthetic mind*.



There *is* a mind resident in man that usually goes unnoticed for the important role it plays in the scope of life. Though found to be present in everyone, it is extremely active in but a precious few in society. This mind lies predominantly dormant in most, and exists in diminishing degrees of latency until it does not appear to be there at all. This is a vitally important mind to the happiness and sanity of man, as it allows for the creative enhancement and high-level view of many facets of existence.

This is the mind that sees and appreciates what beauty exists in whatever form or echelon – from Beethoven to basketball – within yourself and the world around you. It takes the extant condition or circumstance, and envisioning an improvement, imbues and creates that improvement into reality. It formulates,

crafts, composes and establishes the degree of quality existing in every product and creation of man. This mind is an innate mental devise that, the more utilized, the healthier and happier we exist individually and as the community of humankind.

Whatever sublime force created man's finest quality: be it divinely derived, self-initiated, sprang from the brow of Job, or one fine day just happened to leap from a "sea of ammonia," this blessing wonderfully cultures a culture.

This mind is that magic elixir that imbues and engenders to provide our greatest pleasures. It gave you the ecstasy of whatever type of art transcended you to your heart's heaven, and the music that enthralled and made you feel one with the gods. It provided for Buddha's immaculate kindness, Jesus of Nazareth's Godly inspiration, Leonardo Di Vinci's futuristic imagination, Beethoven's passion and Einstein's cognitive genius. It also provided the expertise required to win the Super Bowl and the World Cup, for making the impossible golf shot, and even for creating the award-winning cake at the county fair.

Used by the artist, the architect, the inventor and the visionary; it is their stock in trade. Moreover, in lesser degrees the homemaker uses it to create the home. The businessperson and industrial worker use it to improve conditions and their workplace. The manager, corporate executive and mogul are often successful to the degree they utilize it in the matters of their companies and co-workers.

Life is a drab, fixed and onerous undertaking without it. This is the spice of life, the salsa, the relish and seasoning, the icing on the cake and the size and flavor or the cherry on top. It is the crème de la crème of existence and is what you smile about more than anything else.

This mind, collectively, monitors the standard of living in a society and is essential in every creative advance of our cultures. It was responsible for man's

initial awakening of himself and transcendence from spiritual infancy into a nobility of mind and spirit which was the integral civilizing force in a hitherto fully primitive world; the profound enlightenment period of early India and the East. Later, this mind was behind the first great Western civilization of knowledge and philosophy that remains as the foundation of all Western thought and ideals; the Golden Age of Pericles in ancient Greece. It created the constructive cultivation and civilization of Europe and most of Asia Minor coming from any magnificence that was Rome. It cultivated the later awakening of Western Europe from its somnambulant servitude, exhuming it from a thousand-year grave of cultural censorship, uplifting it into the aesthetic splendor of the *Renaissance*. It patterned the Ages of Enlightenment and Revolution, establishing a New World of freedom and potential in a nation that would spread its influence across the globe, bringing the world an age of industry, technology and communication capable of reaching the stars.

This mind is the sole element allowing man to achieve the hitherto unrealized potential in spirit and glory of creation and of ***being***, and creating on Earth something truly worthy of the name - *life*.

This mind, in function of life's creative spirit, or *élan vital* as Bergson called it, was termed by artist, engineer and humanitarian L. Ron Hubbard, the *aesthetic mind*.

Many differing terms and concepts have been applied in description of this mind; what its operation and mission are, and should be. Nevertheless, it performs as a creative cognitive computer program more sophisticated in potential than anything we will ever be able to design through mechanical means.

Though the subject of *aesthetics* primarily addresses the echelons of higher wavelength *beauty*, aesthetics of course does not solely belong in the zone of the

artist, and one certainly does not have to be an [aesthete](#) to enjoy quality and beauty.

The word comes from the Classical Greek *aisthētikós*, meaning, to perceive, feel, sense, and is a branch of philosophy dealing with the nature of beauty, art, and taste. Scientifically defined, it is the study of sensory or emotional values, and can be judgments of sentiment and taste or critical reflection of art, culture and nature. *Art* comes from Latin, *ars*, meaning skill or craft; denoting the verb sense over the noun meaning.

Many tomes have been written on the subject, and being fundamentally a thing of personal preference, individuals, especially [aestheticians](#) and philosophers have lavishly colored it with arbitrary opinion befitting the universal collage of the creativity that it is. Opinions abound in a subject to the degree it remains uncodified; and as if in dramatization of itself, aesthetics, chafing at the leash of regimentation (except within the boundaries of classical or strictly stylized genres), are as rife with originality as exists in the creative imagination of human and spiritual experience to dramatize it.

Only the most general laws of nature apply to the subject as a whole, to abide the lawlessness of self-expression; the poet's license, the impressionist painter, the jazzman's improvisation, and generally the artist's impetuous temperament of extemporization on nature's themes.

Observably, every endeavor of life contains its art and its science, therefore its aesthetic and knowledge. There is no clear demarcation point between the zones of science and art, but a nebulous and overlapping area.

In its broadest description, science deals with the *knowledge* of life. The etymology of *science* is from Middle English; knowledge, learning, and from Latin *scientia*, back to *scire*, to know. Thus, we see that science is the knowledge of

something, with art being the skill or craft of that knowledge. One may have the knowledge or science of how to drive a car, but lack the skill or art to win the Monte Carlo. The expertise or precision with which one does something determines its artistic value.

Someone who had the knowledge of how to prepare meals for their respective clientele made both the burger at the greasy diner and the finest French cuisine. The cook at the diner has determined to serve food with hopefully a modicum of quality, whereas the chef of the five-star French restaurant will determine to give exceptional culinary quality, with fabulous service and ambiance to match – hopefully commiserate with the tab.

Elevation in one's field is determined by the degree of quality, or artistry, with which one's product or service is delivered. Art has its role from the top to the bottom of life, decreasing in aesthetic value the whole way down. So, it's simple enough to look at any aspect of life and rate its aesthetic value.

Though often solely identified with beauty, aesthetics is not synonymous with beauty, and as we know, *beauty is in the eye of the beholder*. There is an aesthetic quality of anything, low or high, great or small, grotesque or sublime. One *can* perceive the aesthetic of anything, and it can be entertaining and remunerative to observe what aesthetic exists for any person, object or aspect of life.

Admittedly, it is sometimes very challenging to recognize any aesthetic quality in the ugly and repulsive, but “beautiful ugliness”, “the joy of sadness”, “a gorgeous mess”, “good pain” and “delicious evil” are not necessarily oxymorons when a person is enjoying such wavelengths of life. Have you ever appreciated how beautifully an artist captured an ugly piece of life? Or watched in awe how marvelously confused someone created a situation, or a life? Practically everyone has experienced a heart-rending or tear-jerking pleasure.

A friend of mine once commented on the “aesthetic of boxing”, and I thought that if ever there was an oxymoron uttered, this was it. I just smiled and asked him if he could explain this wonderful piece of ambiguity. Not that I hadn’t gotten on that brutish wavelength and enjoyed the sport; but generally I derive more pleasure from looking a beautiful face than watching an ugly one get uglier when turned into a bloody mess.

My friend proceeded to instruct me on the boxer’s form, rhythm, balance, and about the exactly timed and placed force of striking a blow. He enlightened me on the feints, the head and body shifts and bobs, the “resting” while you play defense letting the opponent tire himself out, and about the psychological warfare involved.

In describing this, he had a nostalgic sparkle of wonder and awe in his eyes, and his face lit-up like he’d transcended to boxer’s Valhalla. Glowing, he went on to tell me about probably the greatest fighter of all time; certainly the most flamboyant; Mohammed Ali. Very animatedly in mimic of it, he explained what he called the “Ali death dance,” known broadly as the Ali Shuffle, which consisted of a very quick shuffling of the feet designed to distract, intimidate and position himself for a killer punch or attack. A sports journalist described Ali’s unorthodox style as, *“floating like a butterfly, stinging like a bee.”* Another report said, *“Ali brought beauty and grace to the most uncompromising of sports and through the wonderful excesses of skill and character he became the most famous athlete in the world.”*

When he finished, I sat there looking at him shaking my head in one of those astonished and satisfying chagrins - as I got it! There exists, even in that primordial, bestial abuse of body and soul, an echelon, if low, of aesthetics. The savagery can, and in the modern professional ring, must possess a good portion of well-performed class and a type of sensitivity within the insensitiveness of brutality. I more enjoyed watching boxing after that; the reality of it being

greater. I still will not praise the vast virtues of brain bashing or start a pugilist league in my neighborhood, but I can view it now from a position of more technical appreciation, and no longer have to mentally incarnate the Hulk to enjoy watching the sport.

Can there even be an aesthetic in war? If you have not read Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* it might be more difficult to answer that question. Whether you would care to euphemize that as an aesthetic, the primary point here is that if you know what to look for you can see the aesthetic in practically anything; making more of an appreciable, aesthetic life.

The genius of the great artist: of the brush, string or test tube, often does not come from having a more prodigious aesthetic mind but in greater and finer methods of its utilization. It was probably Thomas Edison's most famous and edifying statement that genius is one-percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration. This reportedly came from his own work in that he tried some ten thousand formulations before coming up with the world-altering science and aesthetic of a light bulb filament.

As we covered earlier there is a nebulous demarcation point between the zones of science and art, as every endeavor of life contains its art and its science, therefore its aesthetic and knowledge. "*Religion, Arts and Science are branches of the same tree.*"—Albert Einstein

The highest level of communication there is, is art. And when you're dealing with individuals as themselves, you are essentially dealing with an artist, because a person must be at least the architect of his or her own universe to be alive at all. One is as alive as h/she is the architect of h/her own universe. You can blow away and erase anger, hate, discomfort or anything else with an aesthetic.

Life itself is an art form, in that life has its skill in the living of it. Thus, to some degree, great or vulgar, all are artists. What is your decision with yourself as to the quality of life you will have? Well, look around you and there is your answer. Even the best can, and should, improve.

After almost forty-years as a professional counselor I have found that the greatest forward stride you can make with an individual will occur when you rehabilitate them artistically. Taking out of them the uncertainty about their own beauty and the beauty of their own work does this. I've seen this countless times, that when you take the art criticism out of he/her you get a tremendous surge of energy and creativity and increased quality of life and enjoyment of living.

The person who breathes the breath of art into something is being an artist. The person who can breath the breath of art into anything is a master artist of their universe.

We sense that true artists have something that others don't. It's just that some have learned to tap into their aesthetic mind. *But anyone can turn on that faucet.*

How? Ok, what are we really looking at when we see an aesthetic? Well, when you refine something higher you've made it more aesthetic. It has to do with actual wavelengths of emotion; the higher the wavelength the higher the aesthetic.

So just straightening up the bedroom and cleaning up the workplace is a fabulous place to start. Notice how much better you feel after that. And if you don't than there is some mental cleaning to do, as there is a direct correlation between the orderliness of the mind and orderliness of the environment, the environment being the manifestation of the mind. To paraphrase Mr. Hubbard, if your area is in disorder your mind is on the border.

But it's a lot more than merely putting things in order, and some of the greatest artists in history were renowned for even priding themselves on disordering themselves and their workspaces.

So, what is the active ingredient of the artist; the phosphorous that turns a burning stick into a sparkler? It's two things: dreams, illusions or mental creations, and the idea, "I know." Even in the beginning when they don't fully know, they sort of counterfeit it until they really do know. It's the confidence in using what is known. Brash people tend to do this. It's painful to see someone on stage or performing in any situation that is introverted and sort of cancelling themselves out, opposed to someone who, even if they aren't expert and make mistakes, are presenting with intention and a degree of agreeable style. The artist deals in future realities, he always seeks improvements or changes in the existing reality. This makes the artist, inevitably and invariably, a rebel against the status quo. The artist, day by day, by postulating the new realities of the future, accomplishes peaceful revolution.

Let's see what some great minds have thought about this.

"Listen, it's really pretty simple. If there's a thing, a scene, maybe, an image that you want to see real bad, that you need to see but it doesn't exist in the world around you, at least not in the form that you envision, then you create it so that you can look at it and have it around, or show it to other people who wouldn't have imagined it because they perceive reality in a more narrow, predictable way. And that's it. That's all an artist does." -Tom Robbins

"Imagination is more important than knowledge," and, "Creativity is intelligence having fun." ~Albert Einstein

The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our souls. -Pablo Picasso

But then no one can tell YOU what your imagination is, or where it should go, or what you should do with it.

Though difficult to envision at times, through dreams actuated by the aesthetic mind, life can be performed on the instrument of choice, in the venue and to the audience chosen, and to the personal standards one decrees of his life. This marvelous endowment and instrument of life should not go unrealized or underemployed; but like the violinist's bow, and the painter's brush, should be practiced to the master's touch and the virtuoso's brilliance.

If all life is a stage as Shakespeare said, and you have made a career of life, play it like a professional.