



THE DECLINE & FALL OF WESTERN ART

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Special thanks to my long-suffering wife. Also to Sam Richardson, Holly Hazeltree, Jikke Gruwel, & Alice Cogan. Cover image: Karl Briullov - The Last Day of Pompeii. 1830, Public Domain.

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Art has been taken from us

“You’re so ugly you could be a modern art masterpiece.”

- *Gunnery Sergeant Hartman, Stanley Kubrick’s Full Metal Jacket, 1987.*

The art we call Modernism is best described as a psychological disease, the goal of which is nothing less than the total destruction of art — which it has more or less successfully done.

Modernism (or Postmodernism) is a philosophy which now dominates the culture, overshadowing us artistically, spiritually, politically and socially. We are immersed in it constantly, so that now virtually nothing is free from its infectious absurdity. From our architecture to our fashion and our way of speaking, to the very ideas you are permitted to express; it is the victory of the final remaining virtue of non-judgementalism. All other virtues have been discarded. What is worse is that it is based entirely on lies and conformism to foggy, relativist thinking. And all this was achieved not by warfare or political force but by obscuring and changing the definition of art.

In terms of creativity, Modernism does the opposite of what it proposes: it claims to unshackle the mind to endless potentiality but in reality creates only illusory, fruitless possibilities and then makes us slaves to them. It traps creativity in a fabricated labyrinth of gimmick that blocks the light of truth and beauty. In the name of this illusory freedom, we dubiously welcome Modernism into our attitudes, unsure or unable to see through its masquerade despite our disgust at its works. We are blinded as to how this monster achieved its total victory, dancing triumphantly over our once lofty aesthetic values. We laugh nervously at its outwardly harmless abstract

trinkets, unarmed against its weaponised nihilism, confused by its very existence.



Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, The Source (1856), Musée d'Orsay, Paris.
Wassily Kandinsky, Kandinsky's first abstract watercolor, 1910.

We innately hate this alien concept but are trained from birth to believe it is the key that has unlocked historic fetters, that this false new definition is in fact the eternal concept of art. When in truth it is a ruse no older than a century. It arms the aggregate populace against its own best interests with

mind-control masked as matronly lenience (a laxness of rules). To this abstract god we sacrifice beauty and tradition, and are rewarded with consumerism and loss of identity. We dismantle our beautiful cathedrals and villages for shopping malls and industrial parks, blind to the destruction we wreak upon ourselves. Moral and intellectual obscurity flow in Modernism's wake, as our bribed and brainwashed scholars make pathetic excuses for unhealthy and preposterous cultural tokens, if only so they can cling to a masochistic, virtue signalling lie for one moment longer. And not because the lie is comforting but only because they are accustomed to it. Natural beauty, an innate truth, has been repackaged as unnatural and evil. For we unfortunates today, the idea that the man-made world should be beautiful is little more than a distant fairy tale. This was not previously the case.

Whether it is an imposition or a strange cyclical inevitability, decent, intelligent people must begin to combat Modernism in daily life. Far too much ground has been given already. Modernism is not a fleeting trend but the catalyst symptom of our lingering death by cultural self-devouring. Our books are censored and trite, our music is base and soulless, our fine visual arts virtually non-existent, and our cityscapes an eyesore of meaningless glass boxes.

From the moment Westerners were duped out of their beauty values, our societies began to lose direction. We gambled with tradition on this promise of a world without constraints, where endless new ideas fell like rain. Of course, nothing could have proven farther from the truth. The world did not immediately burst its banks with endless new possibilities. Instead, a Pied Piper enchanted us down a merry lane where splatter-painting and naked performance art make for enlightened culture. All that remains now is the false illusion of progress gained by extracting shrinking percentages of profit from the dwindling trends spawned from long dead ideas. Reboots and re-imaginings of once vital concepts that now gather dust. The corporate marketing department decrees populist art trends from a vantage of the purest mercantilism. Chain stores will invest heavily in manipulative advertising propaganda to squeeze profits by 0.001 per cent, on what is ultimately a worthless plastic item or cultural token (itself the ghost of a once virile craft), exploiting the remnants of creative forebears who might

as well be aliens to these artless marketing gurus. All our efforts are expended uselessly, our artistic output controlled, censored, automated and lifeless.

And through all of this, only a false social barrier prevents us from the raw creativity that in reality sets all human action in motion. They fear this creativity as it is socially chaotic, tribalist, unsafe, uncontrolled and unquantifiable (despite adhering to a stricter order). So, how to reclaim this rightful vitality? The first step would be acknowledging that we are in decline. To stand up to them, to no longer scoff at the nonsensical art galleries privately, but to complain about them publicly. The root may be long dead as the fruit only now withers on the vine, but in death there will be rebirth. So luckily for us, bad as it is, change is inevitable. The only question is how much of the old and beautiful art will be lost in the transition — as surely the cowards who are so blindly committed to their own suicide will wish to take as much of the past as possible with them to oblivion. Destruction is the price of rebirth but rebirth is also hope of escape from a sullied and pretentious system, gone sour with age and misuse. As Heraclitus said: *there is nothing permanent except change*. Growth and change are necessary and therefore imminent.

During the Renaissance, titans such as da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael lived and worked in the same city, and this same coincidence of locality and time can be said of Beethoven, Schubert, Haydn, and Mozart. So could it really be a random happenstance, a quality of the air or water? Or is it more likely that there were social mechanisms in place to encourage and employ a high stock of creative men, nourishing them and directing their labours towards this transcendent genius? An objective goal and standard? How can we say that such a society should not be of pre-eminent importance? And is such an attitude not far superior to that which prevails now? The pursuit of self-betterment has been slandered and derailed, and no new Michelangelos or Beethovens will be ‘discovered’ until certain manipulative philosophies are exposed as reductionist, destructive and crassly materialist. They facilitate the worship of mass-produced trinkets and elevated graffiti. It is a slavery of the mind, resulting in a slavery to rootless economy. We have torn down and nearly discarded a supreme tradition.

The list of problems an artist faces today is formidable. For roughly a century, the false philosophy of Modernism has allowed the vocation of art to be beset by hordes of untalented hacks, who are then trained to be even worse. The art world has, in fact, been ruled by these people, as the true artist can still be dismissively labelled as *academic* despite there being no prominent traditional academies still in existence — or a traditional element in the upper echelons of the fine arts at all. It has all been destroyed. The artist has no chance of ascension in the art world without accepting Modernism as his religion. For we see once Modernism's redefinition of art was permitted, at first under appeals to open-mindedness and charity, this viral philosophy then swarms and kills the host, converging all sanity until nothing is *allowed* but ugliness and abstraction. But people do not even realise these are competing, oppositional philosophies, they think it all falls under the wide umbrella of art, though they may wonder on occasion why they no longer see any masterful public sculpture or landscape paintings. The very idea that there are two competing worldviews is soon swallowed and lost in the vagaries of Modernist doublethink. Burgeoning genuine artists are laughed at as throwbacks and marginalized to the world of comic books (if they are lucky) or the soulless hell of corporate graphic design. Any exhibition of true talent is an immediate indication that such a person is not a fine artist and not to be incubated in the hard tutelage required to make him great. Our fine artists today are dupes and fakers who make giant blow up sex toys or bland montages of photographs and think they are much cleverer than either Ingres or Phidias.

As harmless as it may sound, from the moment we allowed a random splatter painting to be called high art, albeit in the spirit of inclusivity, the floodgates were opened and all standards were washed away into the void of relativism. It was a lie, and all glib inclusive talk to the contrary is casting a vote for Modernism. Tradition is the harder route and requires discipline and discrimination. To be anything one has to distinguish oneself from an other. Currently, Europeans are scarcely permitted to acknowledge an identity. High Western art is associated with patriarchal achievement, which is a vast and enriching topic likely to induce a now forbidden sense of pride. Pride butts against the trained Pavlovian guilt reflex of obsessive virtue signaling, which gnaws at the tree of knowledge schizophrenically. When up becomes down, even borne out of humility or kindness to the

lower, vulgarity becomes high philosophy and beauty becomes pastiche. It is obscene for being a lie, but that is also its weakness, as truth can only be suppressed for so long. The seeds of lies they have sown are reaping a nonsensical harvest, as we gaze out at an endless vista of bland concrete and see no meaning.

Happily, I feel confident that these deluded art-haters will live to see their horrid works turn to dust, their obtuse plate glass city blocks crumble, their galleries of absurdist objects discarded and junked. As they deserve. There is absolutely no reason to keep them. No spiritual, æsthetic, or philosophical reason of any sort, for us or whomever it may be that survives the inevitable doom-equinox of Modernism and meta-materialism. Nobody, who is not seeking attention as an uber-tolerant, actually wants to hang the painting of smeared bodily fluid in their living room, or place in their hotel lobby the arranged mannequin installation that is indecipherable from random garbage. Outside the insane establishment circles, the works these Modernists create are not truthfully looked on favourably, and the wealthy culture-killers who back them know only money. Modern art is *tolerated* as a symptom of our culturally mandated self-hate: a permissive folly, or a forced top-down degeneracy which has, over decades of propagandizing, succeeded in creating a mass social support (among lemmings and idiots). Those of us who are aware of what is happening now will need to work very hard to

preserve what still remains of real art heritage, as Modernism shows no sign of abating its destructive march. Our historic art inheritance is invaluable and not to be profaned but continually learned from. It must be preserved so that we can return to it one day and be inspired anew, when we are free. Nothing will remain of our history, or future, if we succumb to the Modernist acceleration.

When I speak of Modernism in this volume, I speak of my own interpretation of it, which makes more sense than the current academic one — which is a lie perpetrated by the culture barons. My definition encompasses only the art best considered as abstract and does not include movements like Romanticism (1780-1850) or Art Nouveau (1890-1914), which our art history books claim as Modernism, confusing and conflating

movements without relation. There is no rational evolution from one to the other whatsoever but this does not bother them, as they are liars. Romanticism and early Impressionism have nothing in common at all with obscene movements like Abstract Expressionism or Conceptualism, as I hope to outline. They simply began the early *modern period* and are easily lumped into the text book definition of Modernism (fed to us by its art establishment adherents, of course) to lend false credence to their comparative abstract lunacy. Nor does Modernism imply anything that is new – it is specifically the style of art that is anti-tradition and notable for being abstract and typically ugly. It has a specific philosophy and, unfortunately, a name that most people confuse with meaning recent or fashionable — despite being an art movement now unchanged for more than half a century and getting very stale indeed, even if you claim to be a fan of its early works.

I do not bother mentioning Postmodernism at all, for the reason that once you excise the falsely attributed Romanticism, Art Nouveau and other non-abstract movements from Modernism, then Modernism and Postmodernism have no sensible philosophical or practical difference whatsoever. Postmodernism as a title is just an invented category to pretend there are art movements evolving beyond Modernism, when it is all part of the same dead end: the chaos, the nothingness.

The time has come for us to take up the struggle against the materialist and relativist attacks on beauty. The alternative is a world enveloped in a cold, dishonest darkness — with a population waning in imagination and intelligence.

Modernist art is a weapon

As you may have already guessed, there is an inescapable political element to this artistic decline that must be made abundantly clear: Modernism is not a natural evolution of art but a manufactured political imposition. Therefore, those readers hoping to learn how to revive high culture without breaking politically correct or leftist taboos might wish to halt here. However, traditionalist philosophy does transcend political ideology and many traditionalists hold beliefs which are typically considered leftist (such as environmentalism, anti-industrialization, anti-capitalism, organic farming, beauty and nature values). Traditionalists are not de facto advocates for Christianity, though they are certainly opposed to the nihilism of atheism. However, we are forced to be austere about the realities of tribalism and hierarchy, so the tradition espoused here is, anthropologically speaking, somewhat of the pre-French Revolution right. That is, it seeks only plain and realist answers to any question, despite the fact that they may sound mean or insensitive. There is no way to tackle this subject without rejecting outright many popular liberal credos, including that *equality* is an innate and objective world truth.

Contemporary globalist capitalism and variants of Marxism have proved themselves twin sides of the same evil coin, masquerading as enemies to each other, but with their only true enemy being high art and culture.

Weaker elements among us have always been easily riled and mobilized against a natural hierarchy, at the expense of their own ultimate self-interest. Anti-tradition materialism is the core belief energizing both corporate capitalism and Marxism. Bloody communist mob revolutions have occurred at regular intervals since the French Revolution; the eternal war of the castes. The root impulse here (envy) is no longer guarded against

as a sin but serves as a perpetual tool of political exploitation. Leftists have a long habit of irrationally attacking anything that is self-affirming. They swarm and skirmish with anything that exhibits high quality or smacks of lofty culture. Their mask is a faux compassion and crocodile tears exhibit their perpetual championing of the underdog. The rise of their mediocrity is synonymous with the long-predicted rise of rule by the lowest strata, predicted by doomsayers like Oswald Spengler as the end road of civilization, or the socialist means of its final dissipation — death by envy and guilt.

From what is usually posited as the opposing spectrum of the right, we get more materialism in the guise of the free markets. As it happens, this is largely a clever illusion for rule by super-wealthy oligarchical capitalists, who merely buy votes and favour, and can strangely share much in common with revolutionary communists. To corporate or global interests, art has about as much meaning as baroque music does to a modern teenager. Sadly, despite classical American liberalism or libertarianism being a worthy system under the correct circumstances, it has devolved into something worse than communism. No communist politburo or Stalinist ever made a more sustained or vicious attempt to erase their own people and history as our current capitalist Western elites are currently undertaking. Despite our ongoing illusions of freedom and false feelings of superiority.

These materialists share a rootless philosophy of French Postmodernism and have built an artificial world on their fears. Now, at a stage of near-total lunacy, we find ourselves at war with reason and reality itself, in an arms race of emotional thinking and hysterics. This insanity has been in no small part reached thanks to the discarding of our art, which has left us uprooted, devalued and prone. The idiot-language of Modernism (Artspeak) used to smite our art traditions is a synthesis of Marxist *power-word* language and antihero relativist philosophy. Modernist adherents do not see their art views as a *construct*, a favourite term of theirs, although it is very much an inorganic, late civilization post-commentary. They hold to its precepts religiously as an article of their faith. Despite an espoused hatred for religion, they are indeed religious fanatics.

There is a sexual polarization element to art today, in that women have been told they are the creative sex, that their every happenstance expression of creativity is unquestionable innovative gold. Sadly this newfound innate creativity often seems steered towards nude public screeching or painting with menstrual blood in liberal agitprop. Traditionally male art roles and interests are discouraged and the culture of today believes any consideration of æsthetics to be a purely effeminate disposition. A man so much as wearing a tie or showing sartorial interest above 'jeans' lends accusations of effeminacy, where not long ago every man in the street wore a three piece suit. What is worse, traditional art is associated with patriarchy and oppression, despite its objective excellence (and frequent feminine-celebrating subject matter). Generally, women abstract painters who believe they are natural born artists (due to their sex), along with many men who have no real talent, have supreme confidence in the belief that art does not require skill. Such a philosophy is obviously the champion of mediocrity and decline. These are merely a few facets of a larger cultural virus which is bent on destroying in the name of love and unencumbered by any realistic understanding of the world. Fans of Modernism seemingly delight at every intellectually insulting sideshow, or profess love for graceless bumbling and cheap contrivance in painting, performance or sculpture. They do this because they do not understand art and at the same time have been taught that non-abstract art is now unforgivably associated with an evil colonial past – even in Western nations without a colonial past.

A fact that sounds *not-nice* must now be made *not-true*. Learning becomes impossible as Europeans cannot bear to hear anything affirming and celebratory about their own culture. There is a complete circle of tautology in their minds, which confines and redefines every attempt to expand past this thinking. The Baby Boomers are safeguarded by their television viewership, a medium that exists today largely for them to spend their remaining years in an unchanging bubble of illusion. Meanwhile, our college-educated youth emerge as safe-space lunatics until life experience hopefully dismantles their brainwashing. These two groups are the ground troops for our materialist elite, who manufacture their reality through education and media control. All of it is poisonous and for the true artist there is no outlet at all to speak of, let alone flourish within. Luckily, this illusory state, like all deceptions, is unsustainable. But for as long as this

illusion *is* sustained, decline will roll on – and not just in the arts (which already hit rock-bottom decades ago). As I hope to illustrate, the struggle for reclaiming true art may involve politics, but it is also upstream of politics and even culture. Its revival entails a renewed respect for nature and natural law, and in that sense an environmentalism with aversion to the most materialist and wasteful aspects of pure capitalism. But beyond even that, it is tribal reclamation of philosophy and spirituality, overstepping much of modern history to a more primal worldview (which might be associated with what some have called an *archaic revival*). It involves a view that is more romantic, visceral, competitive, ascetic, beautiful and truthful.

PART 1: What is Western art?

Hellenistic origins of Western art

*“Let no one untrained in geometry enter.”
- Motto over the entrance to Plato’s Academy.*

While you can go back further in time searching for our creative origins, you can certainly not discuss Western art without a reverential acknowledgement of classical antiquity. The sophisticated art of our classical forebears is an eternal reminder of their pre-eminence, of a virile light that must not be extinguished yet has been dimmed.

A people’s art represents their world-soul. Their works encapsulate ancestral motivations, worldview, spirituality and future desires. These qualities flourish within the creative guidelines they set out for themselves, mysteriously handed down through generations, shrouded in myth and refined over time. The beliefs are reflected in the culture’s folk art and academic styles in all major mediums (woodwork, metalwork, textiles, music, pottery, weaponry, architecture, poetry, etc) and this is true of all peoples and epochs. The uniqueness of the Greco-Roman world feeling can still be sensed when you see their surviving friezes, mosaics and temples. This hidden and inseparable artistic soul — representing a specific self-belief, or will to affect the world — lies even within the design of their common-usage objects (bowls and combs, for instance). This design discipline is rooted in their blood and their historic landscape, intangible yet unmistakable. There are not sufficient words in English to describe what can only be thought of as a spiritual connection between a people and their organic art. This idea of art being something inseparable from blood is

extremely important to grasp. So too is the concept that art is the indication of a society's state of health; like the outward signs of health in the body, the beauty value of art reflects a culture's fitness – healthy society, healthy art. Our present-day art symptoms are, needless to say, reflective of a terminal malaise.

The Chinese style and symbolism, in their artwork and architecture, resonate with Chinese people. This requires no explanation and comes as no surprise. It is rooted in tribal impulse and the Chinese style suits the Chinese racial soul. Europeans can appreciate the art of the Chinese but in some ways it is eternally alien and not rousing to us, unlike the art that is native to us. But this is only natural. The same might be said for Semitic art, African, Aztec, etc. Though outsiders might have an appreciation, there is deep historical and spiritual significance in the blood of those who expressed the art; it is theirs. Broadly speaking, Northern Europeans may not be Greek or Roman specifically, but as fellow Europeans, something in their art and literature never fails to excite and inspire. There is a powerful root ancestry at work that transcends European country, language and history differences, which we might brazenly call *Indo-Aryan*, even *Atlantean* (the land of Atlas, if we may boldly choose to use the romantic terms). A people, in a group sense, become an assertion of an idea – symbols. Origins and rationale may get lost in the fog of time but they never lose vitality. That is Tradition.

Whatever ancient holy fire mobilized Hellenic civilization, they cannot be said to have been anything less than supremely creative. They originated or perfected so many fundamental ideas, so much that still invigorates us today, that Western people on the whole cannot express enough gratitude to their ingenuity and hard work. They demonstrated excellence in art, philosophy, natural science, athleticism, war, law, theatre, mathematics, music, astronomy and much more. *Aristotle* (384-322BC) codified the scientific method itself, using his inductive-deductive system to rationally advance humanity's collective objective knowledge. There were thinkers of this epoch whose ideas were so profound they have tremendous influence and relevance today, despite only surviving in fragments, such as *Heraclitus* (535-475BC), whose idea of logos is an enduring root Western principle.

The significance of these classical Greek achievements has filled many books already and nobody who has read the classics or beheld Greek and Roman art is capable of forgetting the experience. It is part of the quintessence of being European, the ways of the ancients – to whom we owe everything.

The Greek heroic ideals were personified in art values suitable to their ascending aims. Homer's Iliad and Odyssey are an early mythical focal point that best establish Hellenic moral origins. Homer should always be considered the starting point for examination of the impetus behind Greek and, later, Roman civilization. Indeed, for all Western European epochs and thinkers, Homer is ever-present. First principles, even when anachronistic or unprovable, are the motivation behind all that comes after. The Iliad poem dates to the archaic period of Classical Antiquity, likely from the eighth century BC. Herodotus placed Homer at circa 850BC and Homer is older than the actual events of the Iliad by an additional 400 years, during which it was passed down as an oral tradition until recorded by his followers.

"On their side Odysseus, Diomedes and the two Aiantes, urged on the Greeks who, fearless of the violent Trojan onslaught, stood their ground, unmoving as the mist with which Zeus caps the mountain tops in calm weather; when angry Boreas and the other winds are sleeping, with all their fierce gusts that send the dark clouds fleeing. So did the Greeks stand firm against the Trojans and held their place. Agamemnon's commanding voice echoed through the ranks: "Be men, my friends, take heart, fear nothing but dishonour in others eyes. When men shun shame, more survive than not, in flight there is no glory, no salvation.

"So saying, he swiftly hurled his spear striking a comrade of brave Aeneas, Deicoön son of Pergasus, whom the Trojans honoured like a son of Priam, for his readiness to fight in the vanguard. The spear struck his shield, and meeting little resistance passed straight through, past his belt and into the lower belly. He fell with a thud, and a crash of armour.

"Aeneas in reply killed two Danaan champions, Crethon and Orsilochus sons of Diocles, whose father lived in noble Pherae. A man of

substance, his line began with the river-god Alpheus, whose broad stream flows through Pylian lands, and whose son was the great King Orsilochus. He begat Diocles in turn, whose sons these were, skilled in warfare. Reaching manhood, they followed the Argives to horse-breeding Troy in the black ships, to win compensation for the Atreidae. Now their voyage ended there in death. Like a pair of lions reared in a mountain-thicket that prey on the farmers' fine sheep and cattle till they themselves fall to the bronze blade, so these two at the hands of Aeneas were toppled like tall firs."

- Homer, The Iliad

This central Greek myth, which is based in historical fact, involves overcoming adversity and tragedy during an inexorable conflict and choosing eternal glory over natural life. The story illuminates the importance the ancients placed on courage, honour and heroic virtue, which hinted at the Apollonian rectitude of the Aryan warrior mannerbund, the solar spirit that invokes awe. The depth of fidelity in the Iliad's often gory battles are sacrosanct lessons in bravery above all else: fighting against overwhelming odds for the sake of honour alone, despite the inevitability of death. The heroes are driven by the often unfulfilled and unquenchable desire for justice, though they fall to the dust on each side of the conflict to equal praise of their deeds. The heroes defeat cowardice and doubt within themselves on every page, championing a physical courage that is not blind or animalistic but romantic and intellectual, that their deeds may overcome the fear and torture of their situation to exalt honour for eternity – honour and courage being that part of them which is already eternal, borrowed from the infinite upon birth and never to be besmirched.

Achilles knows he will die for avenging Patroclus but he takes the road of everlasting glory. That is the volcanic clash of superhuman personalities, when men's choices attain the godlike through the passion of determination. All life stories end in tragedy, one way or another, and it is that bittersweet reality we seek in drama and fables. This is an emotional essence that is markedly absent from today's safe, Postmodernist storytelling. Greek myths expounded the eternal cycle of nature and we read Greek and Roman writers today to immerse ourselves in the clever emotional asseveration of *being human*.

“Zeus stirred sombre noise, and sent bloody drops of dew down from the heights of heaven, as he prepared to send many a brave soul to Hades.”

Following *The Iliad*, the *The Odyssey*, embarks on an adventure story revolving around determination and retribution. The *Odyssey* glorifies in testing the limits and wits of poor Odysseus, a man alone in the trials of life, struggling against gods and monsters, until reaching home to wreak bloody vengeance upon those trying to claim his wife and lands. It may be hard for us to grasp that this adventure story is religious myth, with self-overbecoming at the heart of the canon.

“As he spoke he gave the signal, and Telemachus, the godlike hero’s steadfast son, slung on his sharp-edged sword, grasped his spear, and stood beside his father, armed with the glittering bronze.”

- The Odyssey

It is said the Greeks thought of history as before them and the future coming from behind to envelope them, which confuses our forward-linear view of time. I suppose it has to do with knowing and being able to see the past. Homer was thus before them and was the link between the Athenian golden age and the murky prehistory of those Mediterranean islands, where legends and history melded. The poetic oral tradition was a bridge of ancestor worship, from the time of Pericles back to the walls of Troy, to the ancient halls of Mycenae and beyond, to the romance myth of Hyperborean northern origins. By celebrating the honourable inner life in myth, it becomes the standard for mortal men to attain, a quest. And in their transcendent search for goodness, the Greeks developed theories of beauty values and related beauty to nobility and truth, and expressed it in art. Their moral tradition was thus ascending — and devotion to reason and rejection of the comforts of delusion honed their craft and their science, so that they were advanced enough to have machines not unlike early computers (as demonstrated by the Antikythera Mechanism⁴).

The unique creative capabilities of their culture sprang from this magic combination of realism and idealism. It included ideas of the pre-eminence of virtue, philosophical curiosity, strict and warlike honour discipline, and a theology bounded by nature. Their achievements were so inspiring that all

European high art (in painting, architecture, literature and philosophy) has obsessed over Hellenic themes through the ages.

But what more specifically set the Greeks (and by extension the Romans) apart, particularly in regards to art?

They gave us a formula for beauty.

Platonic Forms & the Golden Ratio

The formula for beauty that has been handed down to us is the *Golden Ratio*, also called the *Golden Mean* or *Golden Section* (in Latin, *Sectio Aurea*). It is the aesthetically perfect proportion and a root principle in all traditional European architecture, painting, sculpture and music. Two quantities are in the Golden Ratio if their ratio is the same as that of their sum to the larger of the two quantities. In an equation form, it looks like this: $a/b = (a+b)/a = 1.6180339887498948420\dots$

The Golden Ratio appears in patterns everywhere in nature, in the spiral arrangements of leaves, pine cones, shells and even in the human body. It is the ratio to which each part relates to the sum of those parts.

It was the Pythagoreans who arrived at our earliest recorded concept of the fundamental nature of numbers. The Hellenic philosophers saw number as the basis for all, both physical and metaphysical.

“Geometry has two great treasures: one is the theorem of Pythagoras, the other the division of a line into mean and extreme ratios, that is, the Golden Mean. The first way may be compared to a measure of gold, the second to a precious jewel.”

- Johannes Kepler, astronomer (1571-1630)

Pythagorean philosophers such as Philolaus (470-385BC) and Archytas (428-347BC) explained the structure of the world in accord with numbers, the expression of which was found in studies of proportion. They discovered that the harmony and proportion in numbers was directly related to beauty in the world, or the result of it, and thus formulae could both explain and engineer beauty. This was true across all considerations of beauty, not just the visual arts. For example, Pythagoras considered music

and astronomy to be related sciences. Geometry was number in space, music was number in time, and astronomy was number in space and time. With a root understanding of numbers and a morality of beauty-expressions, art and science appear clearly as one mutually striving cultural expression. The word technology does not to our modern ears have a connotation of art or craft, though it derives from the Greek *techne* (τέχνη), meaning art, skill, cunning of hand or relating to craft. The Golden Ratio demonstrates the link between the tangible world and the imagined, the physical and the metaphysical. It is the rational summation of art as a system reducible to a number and proportion. Proportion is thus a key concept accounting for beauty. *Symmetria*, meaning good proportion, was the word commonly used for this vital classical concept. It is a straightforward and functional account for the sensed goodness attributed to visual beauty. The idea that philosophers and artisans once considered this a fundamentally objective rationale exposes the level of deceit we are burdened with under Modernist relativism. *Symmetria* was a fundamental design precept and remains so in all true art (including music). I am falling short in not including science and religion here as I should but we must continue from our modern perspective, where these disciplines are falsely bifurcated. The same beauty of proportion desired in art is found everywhere in nature, which is both hyper-rational and hyper-spiritual.

“Symmetry is a proper agreement between the members of the work itself, and relation between the different parts and the whole general scheme, in accordance with a certain part selected as standard.”

— *Vitruvius*

Plato himself, of whom it is said all other philosophy is but a footnote, has many passages relating to good proportion or the ratio of parts. Alongside *symmetria*, Plato had a theory revolving around eternal, idealized Forms that act upon the world. Things become beautiful because they decide to take part in the Form of beauty. Plato also said this Form of beauty was also directly associated with the Form of good. In his *Symposium*, the Form of beauty was also associated with the acquisition of knowledge, which inspired inquiry in the world and led to the sciences. To think of beauty (and goodness) as corporeal, idealised Forms that the real world can only move towards in exultation and learning, means they are

absolute and everlasting. The tangible result of this insight is the unsurpassed beauty and confidence of traditional Western art.

The great NeoPlatonist *Plotinus* (204-270AD) expounded on the notion that Intellect (nous) is the cause of beauty, that it is the Intellect that imposes the Forms on to passive matter, thus producing beauty. Those entities that do not participate in the Forms of beauty and intellect are ugly. Plotinus said the Form is therefore capable of producing beauty by virtue of its being an instrument of the Intellect that creates order and structure out of chaotic matter in the universe. In the macrocosmic sense this is the same work Greek sculptors *Phidias* (480-430BC) and *Polykleitos* (died 420BC) performed when creating their timeless sculptures. Their intellect was the instrument that derived primal Forms from marble.

Polykleitos wrote in his treatise, entitled *Kanon*, how beauty derives from symmetria, and explained the construction the ideal human figure using ratios, rhythmic poses, and as a system of measure similar to that used in temple building. The *Kanon* (meaning measure or law), which is now sadly lost, discussed not only ideal proportions for the parts of the human body in relation to one another, but how sculpture of the human figure must achieve a dynamic counterbalance between relaxed and tensed body parts, and the directions in which the parts move. He put these principles into practice in his own sculpture, which then formed a framework for all ordered European sculpture since. The basis of this art is *number*, tempered with philosophy and spirituality, with an aim to express beauty values in the exultation of *goodness, truth* and *reason*.

This idealization with the human form as premise was a groundbreaking civilizational achievement. It is an advanced level of otherworldly perfection, which captures both the Form of the subject and the Form of beauty (and thereby goodness): ennobling and boundless. It is more or less, in fact, the exact opposite of what Modernist art values teach, which is that idealism does not exist at all and we should all wallow in valueless subjectivity (nihilism) and excuse ugliness. When you see a Greek sculpture, you sense immediately the greatness of the underlying civilization or philosophy. Who made this? What is the mystery of this achievement? You know you have been witness to the artistically

superhuman and that work can never be unseen. You know too, in an instant, the near impossibility of surpassing the maturity of that idealism. That it presents a monumental task, requiring confidence and optimism, because it has expended such effort that it has tapped into the eternal. And setting this near impossibly high standard as the goalpost of excellence has been antiquity's greatest gift to the legacy of European art. That is the track whereon was set the locomotive of Promethean achievement. This is the vitality of tradition, and why it cannot be discarded out of hand for convenience-technology and a confused and vacant *newness*. It is the striving upward, reaching for the impossible, and it has memory.

In the concept of *heroic nudity*, a Hellenistic idealism also championed in the Kanon, we find another recurring artistic theme from all subsequent (pre-Modernist) Western art. Nudes were not celebrated in the lusty, juvenile way they might be today, nor depicted in warts-and-all realism. Avoiding that obvious realism was the stratagem to ennobling the naked form. Hellenic men were depicted as fit, ready for war, but formularized to avoid any tawdry sexual aspect that takes away from that visual nobility. This creates the perception that the figures are closer to demi-gods or titans than common men — by insinuating a powerful aloofness from worldly pleasures and animalistic distractions. This is why their genitals were not enlarged, and their gesture or expression betrayed nothing resembling sensuality or material lust, despite being both nude and athletically exaggerated. To suggest divine nobility, they presented the stark honesty of nudity, the majesty of fitness, but without the invocation of sexual desire. This is no easy feat.

The same can be said, and more importantly so, for female sculptural nudes, who are even more difficult to portray without sexual connotation. Yet Hellenic female nudes, while beautiful, are neither voluptuously sexual nor realist-ugly. Rather, they are ennobled with the finer virtues, with the form of femininity. They are portrayed in sybaritic nakedness, yet they do not exude sexual lewdness. Again, not an easy achievement, considering the powerful allure of the fairer sex. But this is the achievement of Greek sculptors. Long torsos, Roman noses, smaller cone-shaped breasts, delicately posed hands and feet, juxtaposed matronly hips and stances, and all balanced with Euclidian proportions. The accentuated points of beauty

are not the obvious but rather the sense of weight in the figure and the naturalistic folds suggesting action of the flesh. An artistic view of beauty so mature it transcends (without rejecting) erotic desire.



Venus Braschi by Praxiteles, type of the Knidian Aphrodite, Munich Glyptothek.

Focus on what would seem mundane elements elevates the subject to the divinity of high art. The position of a finger, perfectly fleshed, the weight of the gait. These idealized marble females appear fertile, matronly and goddess-like. They inhabit metakosmia: empty spaces between worlds in the vastness of infinite space. Because each tiny section of Hellenic sculpture is created in relation the rest and the whole, in accordance with the Golden Ratio, that sense of potency (the eternal) lives within them, even when the works are damaged or survive in fragments. As the French sculptor Rodin said: *“Beauty is like god, a fragment of beauty is beauty complete.”* The sculptures are inspired by nature and are therefore

devotional to nature, and like her they are timeless. This relates again to the magic of *equilibrium* and *rhythmos* found in the Golden Ratio. These principle of ratios and sacred geometry will always apply, to all craft, from Mozart sonatas to basket weaving. Aspiring artists must understand this formulation and the philosophy surrounding it as fundamental to art, yet today they are not even taught about its existence. The formula's importance to the Hellenes meant their art was not a passing onerous hobby, taken glibly as we sadly see today. It was religious, it was tied into daily reality and the eternal, and superseded all other considerations, or was intrinsic to them. Art was of paramount importance. That cogency was common knowledge to all successful civilizations and this simple reality is somehow hidden from us now. True art has no end but its own perfection.

“For he who would proceed aright... should begin in youth to visit beautiful forms... out of that he should create fair thoughts; and soon he will of himself perceive that the beauty of one form is akin to the beauty of another, and that beauty in every form is one and the same.”

– Plato

When the Roman architect *Vitruvius* (died 15AD) used this concept of *symmetria* in his seminal work *De Architectura*, he explained it in terms of specific numerical ratios. Vitruvius noticed that ancient architects always used a system of proportions to ensure harmonious design, rather than picking each dimension with no regards to the others in a structure. For most of history and all worthwhile architectural epochs, this was achieved using nothing more than straight edge, compass and stretched cord.

The power of the hand-made.

Thus, as per Leonardo's *Vitruvian Man* (after Vitruvius, around 1490), beautiful proportions are found in the same ratios whether it is in the distance from the chin to the scalp on a human head or the relation of the placement of windows on a building's facade. All good proportion follows the beauty Form — and the subject is interchangeable.

The Roman commitment to Hellenistic beauty values can still be seen today in their surviving monumental aqueducts and public buildings. These æsthetic leftovers of empire have inspired our forebears again and again, as

they do us today. They are a reminder: do not succumb to luxury or mediocrity, or aim anywhere but upwards — for instinctual and intellectual idealism. The Romans understood well and prudently that ultimately in life, there is only *weakness* or *strength*. We are very far from the days of the Colosseum, stunted and childishly reliant on technology, while a man you never see kills the chickens and cows you eat every day. A Roman noble was expected to hunt boar with his spear held in front of him, unmoving, to be gored or run the beast through. To turn away, a coward, was the only way to lose. Honesty and truth above safety and comfort. Modern Westerners live in comfort and think sadly little of the honour or courage espoused by Homer, brainwashed into dismantling what was built for us by our betters. We have a tough, ancient lesson to re-learn, a lesson that is going to be more taxing the longer we put it off.

“Ex nihilo nihil fit (Nothing comes from nothing)”
– *Lucretius*

Hard work is the sacred element to any achievement. Our lives are given meaning not by their comfort or longevity but by the overcoming of tremendous obstacles — to really feel alive you need something worth dying for. Europeans have a long legacy of tireless heroes and scholars we are indebted to — and the threat of losing their efforts is something worth dying for. If by any twist of fate we find ourselves in a new Renaissance, you will know that *Belle Époque* has returned by the appearance of *aesthetic monumental art*. Only with regained idealism will we again behold art that channels and reveals the eternal Platonic Forms — and know that Goodness has returned.

PART 2: How art has declined

Art in decline: a PROBLEM IN THREE PARTS

We must now start breaking down in detail the philosophy of Modernism and its origin. But momentous things always come in threes (a sacred number). The artless world of today is a three-headed monstrosity, each head with its own motivation for chaos. These evils feed off each other and into increasing decline, in a glut of destruction. There may be additional cultural processes at play in this degenerative work but they generally fall under one of these three categories. Because they are seemingly unrelated, yet in congress and each multi-faceted, attempted resistance to modern art and industrial exploitation can feel overwhelming, our search for escape blocked at every turn. Nevertheless, this is the task fate has put before us.

These forces are:

1) **The philosophy of Modernism**, an invention of art criticism we will trace to its inception, along with the first truly abstract art, and outline an art history timeline which examines the degenerative movements alongside the uncorrupted. This philosophy, while an idea and not exactly a force, is nevertheless the foundation upon which stand the other two forces.

2) **The rise of materialism over idealism and religious morality**. This entails populist atheism (nihilism), consumerism, corporatism, feminism, multiculturalism, relativism and our current devolution towards a strange corporate communism through censorship and media collusion. All of

which need to be addressed individually, or broad and instantaneous annulment through the restoration of traditional morality.

3) **Industrialization and mass-production**, both of which are obviously a facet of technological advancement but in the service of capitalist globalism become a tool of the materialist mercantile class against localized art and craft diversity. Each of these three evils is independent but they also work in tandem. First, we must discuss the theory of Modernism and its roots in the art criticism of Clement Greenberg⁵. From there, we must take a long look at the rise of cultural materialism, starting with political correctness. Finally, we consider the knotting of both these problems in the fabric of industrial mass production and exploitation.

I. The philosophy of Modernism

Understanding Artspeak

“The notion that the public accepts or rejects anything in modern art is merely romantic fiction. The game is completed and the trophies distributed long before the public knows what has happened.”

– Tom Wolfe

The ‘Fine Art’ critic with his verbose obfuscations is the true modern artist, the architect of our artless wasteland. The actual artist or art creator is a secondary and superfluous consideration to the published criticism. The critic’s flowery language and fantastical postulations leverage a false overconfidence in his virtue signalling — that is, in his expression of liberal opinion in exchange for social reward. Working tirelessly to defend this Modernist art that is so obviously worthless, his philosophy seems to rest defensively upon the seemingly simple trickery of descriptive muddling. That is to say, talking nice-sounding nonsense that confuses and disguises garbage as highbrow intellectual sleight of hand.

This customized gibberish language has become known as Artspeak. Its meaninglessness is implied in the name but this does not impede its continued prevalence.

“Her practice provides a useful set of allegorical tools for manoeuvring with a pseudo-minimalist approach in the world of conceptual art: these meticulously planned works resound and resonate with images culled from the fantastical realm of imagination. With a conceptual approach, she

presents everyday objects as well as references to texts, painting and architecture. Pompous writings and Utopian constructivist designs are juxtaposed with trivial objects. Categories are subtly reversed.”

*- The Guardian, Artspeak: Culture Sector's Most Wanted,
Matthew Caines*

Artspeak is language, an expected absurdity of pseudo-intellectual babble that interprets emotionally the random nonsense one finds in modern art galleries with a cheap pretense of intellectualism. This is usually achieved by implying that any subject artwork somehow abstractly ‘represents’ a topical liberal subject. This wilful irrationality makes for a sort of instant social currency in our bizarre age of popular anti-traditionalism. Those who decry the obvious nonsense as nonsense are shouted down as ‘Nazis’ and ‘bullies’.

Artspeak is the vehicle for delivering these bad ideas. It is a jargon that is unclear even to those who use it regularly. And, indeed, it is meant to be so as its goal is obfuscation, and to some degree aggrandizement, and it does not survive serious scrutiny. It is a weaponised relativism and subconsciously excuses every base anti-art discipline from graffiti to cringe-inducing ‘performance art’. I say subconscious because we are trained to accept it from our youth.

Critics refer to Artspeak as the *‘language of modern art’* while admitting that almost no one understands it.

Another typical example:

‘...a group of sculptural works that aims at a void that signifies precisely the non-being of what it represents...’

The more obscure or the harder to find the hidden meaning behind the pointlessness is, the more successful the game. Thus, admirers of Modernism like to speculate on what the artist is ‘saying’, whereas the former purpose of art was the expression of beauty and cultural affirmation.

Despite being a fairly obvious swindle, this funny game has enjoyed terrific success. I suppose initially this was due to an apathetic or bored

bourgeois conformism, and later (now) by media-monopoly propaganda, surrounding a racket that may easily be, at the top levels, revolving around money laundering. Artspeak has at intervals not escaped scrutiny and has been labelled by the sceptical as *'the lingo of intellectual kitsch'*. Here are several incidentally humorous (but by no means uncommon) examples of Artspeak available online, posted by disenfranchised former art students, as nobody with anything better to do tends to take any interest.

"The subject matter of anal sex invites an examination of cultural psychologies of domination and submission as they relate to labor, race, gender and class. Though conceived upon a mathematical formula, the film's acts arrive at a succession of fluctuating outcomes, which yield an analysis of contemporary social structures in Spain."

– Source: press release Santiago Sierra @ Team Gallery

"These and other spatiotemporal preconceptions are superimposed and interwoven in an alluring filmic meditation on standardization and irreversibility titled The Refusal of Time (Prologue) – Anti Mercator, 2011. Here, scattered flecks of charcoal magically revert to the coffeepot shape they formed before being dispersed, while a dancer wearing a globe-shaped costume symbolizes resistance against the flatness of the Mercator. Finally, another drawing from Towards the Black Wall Procession references the third moment, the theory of black holes which are thought to destroy spatiotemporality altogether: It shows a procession of people inexorably marching toward their death."

– Source: Rahma Khazam reviewing *The Refusal of Time*

"Allusions to variously hued skin, voluptuous folds and juicy orifices merge with the words and punctuation marks—loaded, humorous and poetic by turn. War Frieze IX (1992), a multipart, 10-foot-long section from a 200-foot-long work concerning the Gulf War, demonstrates Schor's early fusion of words and paint, as well as the importance to her of feminism, which has informed her practice into the present. Issuing from a breast on one end and a phallus attached to an ear on the other, a red liquid stream outlined in squiggly pubic hairs spells out the word 'undue' in cursive. The pink, impastoed, fleshlike ground bears the word like a tattoo. In the Gulf War context, 'undue' could describe excessive force; but, given Schor's

predilection for double entendres, it also implies 'undo', as milk morphs into blood, the nurturing breast undone (presumably) by the weaponlike phallus."

– Source: Constance Mallinson reviewing Mira Schor @ CBI, artinamericamagazine.com

"It does not take much stretching of the imagination, to see in the urinal's gently flowing curves the veiled head of a classic Renaissance Madonna or a seated Buddha."

– Calvin Tomkins, art critic of the *New Yorker*, on Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain of 1917*.

That is all very entertaining, hilarious even, if the deluded earnestness was not so depressing. An even more telling example of Artspeak is in relation to the Abstract Expressionist and Pop Art aficionado Robert Rauschenberg, who is more famous for his exhibit *Erased de Kooning Drawing*, (a supposed drawing by Willem de Kooning which Rauschenberg erased). In 1951, Rauschenberg created a series of what he called *White Paintings*, The stated purpose of these pieces was to: *"Reduce painting to its most essential nature, and to subsequently lead to the possibility of pure experience."*

Wonderful Artspeak – you would think he was actually saying something. This sort of kitsch, uplifting pap excuses the fact he did not paint a stroke. Of course, the paintings were literally blank. White, unpainted canvas. It was a brazen proposal that the very act of painting anything is a dispensable element of painting itself. Conveniently, he was also sidestepping the need to do any actual work. Were I the artist in question, what sort of reception would I expect for such audacious pugnacity, unveiling an unpainted canvas and basking in the response of creative conjecture to justify the notion that something artistic has happened? When in fact he has done nothing at all? The pretentiousness of these people is outside of understanding.

So sadly, and not surprisingly, the reviews of the time for the unpainted canvas art were overwhelmingly positive. Of course, the same would largely be the case today, providing they had the correct publicity and spoke

in Artspeak, completely despite the fact they are literally doing nothing and that it is now a nothing-trick that has been done before. Being ludicrous and boring is what they are all about. The main defence of this cynicism, delivered through Artspeak, is that he has “*made you think about painting*”. Always, these attempts at a cheap philosophy, an appeal to the education of the commons by doing nothing and having no standards. It does not matter that he is displaying nothing, that he claims to be a painter while painting not a stroke. The opportunist hucksters who run our art institutions fall over themselves to worship these banal tricks so that they can survive on their gravy train of trend. You shock with ugliness or audacity, there is a collective Dadaist gasp and everyone moves on until a new low is discovered. That is pretty much the definition of art these days. Much like reality TV, or modern pop music, there is nothing at all at its heart. You see it and you feel nothing. It might consist of a moment’s fleeting entertainment but even then only in the sense of its audacious crappiness.

To quote more critical Artspeak of the unpainted canvas: “*Rauschenberg was seeking to demonstrate audacity of concept, not painterly skill.*”

If this statement was actually philosophically profound in any sense, I am not sure how or why it would not be better expressed in a book or essay, as opposed to a visual art carnival. But we all know that would not fly, as there is no meaningful idea, just as there is no visual art here. The audience is left to come up with its own ideas and thereby think it has been clever, which is extremely patronizing. Art criticism of the White Painting is incredibly thoughtless and excusing:

“*...Rather than thinking of them as destructive reductions, it might be more productive to see them ... as hypersensitive screens ... the smallest adjustments in lighting and atmosphere might be registered on their surface.*”

Yes, let us call them ‘hypersensitive screens’, pointing out the adjustment of light in the room. It is actually even more tedious to read the criticism than to view the work itself. What if it just also happens to be a blank canvas, put up by somebody pulling the wool over eyes desperate to be blinded? Does it matter that it could so easily be a hoax? Artspeak does

not exist with and is not needed with pre-Modernist art. There is simply no way to rationally speculate that Pugin or David were pulling a fast one, as their work speaks for itself. Even if the all-white canvas is not specifically a con, what in particular is so brilliant about this puzzle of searching for its meaning? How does this trite game expound upon or rival traditional art?

In these situations, the artist himself has to be either a conniving opportunist or a narcissist who believes his every thought a phenomenon of brilliance. It is infinitely sadder to realise that Rauschenberg's white canvas was offered up fully 60 years ago and nothing much has changed in the art establishment since. One might have hoped they would at worst recognize this as a dalliance and move on, a momentary and feverish pinnacle of irony. But no, both the art and the criticism have stayed firmly on this hamster wheel, only with added deceit, degeneracy and vapidty. They are caught in an eternal mental maze, a tautological word-trap without an exit that will only be vanquished by the imposition of a traditional order or the total collapse of our inherited civilization.

As demonstrated in Rauschenberg's paintings, some pieces are so irreverent as to not exist at all. The absurdity and childish lack of logic applied here, indeed the lack of intellectual honesty, should be obvious. Typically, an Abstract Expressionist or Conceptualist master of Artspeak manages to create an intellectual impression by using crafted writing. Indeed, I am by no means the first to have claimed the only real creativity in contemporary art comes from the Artspeak or criticism, not the actual work. These critics and writers bound over each other, jubilantly, not only to justify the merits of these works but to praise them as life-changing events. It is perhaps in its obviousness that Modernist art gets away with perpetuating this bizarre culture of criticism. Certainly, the unpainted white canvas can, if you try really hard, reflect back some of the light of the room. But that this should be interpreted as an act of sublime prowess on the artist's part is quite laughable, even completely idiotic to suggest. This smoke and mirrors nonsense is what passes for artistic intellectualism and has reigned undaunted for over a century. But how do they get away with it?

In his 1975 book *The Painted Word*, Tom Wolfe crafted the thesis that under Modernism, art had moved away from being a visual experience in favour of becoming a literary one.

“In the beginning we got rid of nineteenth-century storybook realism. Then we got rid of representational objects. Then we got rid of the third dimension altogether and got really flat (Abstract Expressionism). Then we got rid of airiness, brushstrokes, most of the paint, and the last viruses of drawing and complicated designs... there, at last, it was! No more realism, no more representation objects, no more lines, colors, forms and contours, no more pigments, no more brushstrokes. Art made its final flight, climbed higher and higher in an ever-decreasing tighter-turning spiral until... it disappeared up its own fundamental aperture... and came out the other side as Art Theory! ... Art Theory pure and simple, words on a page, literature undefiled by vision... late twentieth-century Modern Art was about to fulfill its destiny, which was: to become nothing less than Literature pure and simple.”

Wolfe very vocally criticized three prominent art critics whom he daringly named the kings of ‘Cultureberg’: Clement Greenberg, Harold Rosenberg and Leo Steinberg. Wolfe argued that these three men were dominating the world of art with their theories and that — unlike the world of literature in which anyone can buy a book — the art world was controlled by an insular circle of rich collectors, museums and critics with outsized influence. This largely unknown but powerful group of influencers, similar to the notorious ‘*Frankfurt school*’ (along with many other solicitors of Modernism, from Rosenberg to the Guggenheim), work a slow-paced, unseen influence to push culture against tradition, packaged as a *fresh approach* to an eager youth. By redefining art the tradition becomes defunct. As to why they do this (if they even have any self-awareness), it would seem that by discarding healthy tribal ethics we are left more easily exploitable as rootless democratic consumers (with a faux-individualist, corporate morality which interprets art and life ‘*whatever way we want*’, like a corny TV commercial). They can package and sell us anything now, as long as it is presented under this illusion of personal choice. The non-European art theory of abstraction accompanied by art-narrative (as opposed to beauty as standalone truth) is *not* an organically occurring trend,

but a purposely injected *cultural virus*. The confusion and relativism of art-without-feeling helps them regulate and diffuse a European custom linked to national and religious custom. It may additionally be postulated as an elaborate economical scheme to manage the upper art market for the purpose of laundering money, with essentially worthless art objects exchanging hands at inflated, invented prices. In all these cases we are witnessing the exploitation of naturally competing cultures and classes living together and the washed-out materialist dead zone where they meet in the commons. Regardless of the realities of disparate world views, an honest assessment can only conclude that 20th century liberal-philosophical influence upon European art traditions has been nothing but a disaster. But of course, we can only blame ourselves for *falling for it*, for allowing our art custodianship to be in the hands of those who do not naturally understand it, or who do not share our love for it. It is we, ourselves, who have been careless and made a doormat of our charge, for following blindly the words of con-artists.

Of Wolfe's kings of Cultureberg, by far the most notable and notorious would be the nefarious art critic Clement Greenberg. It was he who invented the language of Artspeak, cementing the new philosophy in the culture and academia. In a sense, by inventing Artspeak, Greenberg invented the vehicle for Modernism, which as an art is so objectively worthless it cannot exist without being propped up on this pretentious wordsmithing. The work itself is beside the point, secondary to the criticism in importance and creativity. So, unsurprisingly, Modernism as a serious movement cannot even be said to have been created by visual artists.

“With an ‘advanced’ artist, it’s not now possible to make a portrait.”
- Clement Greenberg

This is a telling Greenberg quote, which exposes the verbal manipulation of buzzwording phraseology at work. It is an essentially meaningless statement with no real rationale and no attempt to support the obscure claim with evidence or example. It is merely a celebration of the abandonment of standards, a bombastic lie that somewhere in the meaningless abstract is hidden the new tier of quality. It speaks of a standard unfathomable to everyone except these scribbling art critic

‘experts’, which is then feigned by the credulous curator splatter-gazers. Because art history texts do their best to muddle together traditional art and Modernist works, it becomes harder to find a clear originator of Modernism in practice. But with a bit of research for art that ‘does not make sense’, it would seem the very first abstract paintings successfully exhibited were by the Russian Expressionist *Wassily Kandinsky* (1866-1944). Greenberg and Kandinsky must be considered the forefathers of the anti-art movement that has made a farce of once proud and beautiful cities, galleries, concert halls, books and culture.

Our entire corpus of contemporary artistic methodology is more or less a product of Greenberg’s writing — all of it based on the style of Artspeak he founded. Today, it is the jargon of the entire art world: the critics, teachers, academics, historians, gallery owners, museum directors and artists who celebrate this endless verbal trickery. They stare at absurd objects and they muse, ponder and speculate, within the mental guidelines he has provided, and they think that is art. Greenberg’s theories gave post-war Modern Art academia its established respectability. Abstract Expressionism was really his masterwork, popularized by the conspicuous rhetoric he invented. The rhetoric is supported by the press that procures fame for our modern-day Warhols and Hirsts, whose rock star status for being art critic dupes may have originated our obsession with celebrity regardless of merit. These behaviours sprang from the cheapened, hyper-materialistic world abetted and exploited by Greenberg and those who followed after him.

To quote him regarding the absurdist movement Dada:

“Duchamp apparently realized that his enterprise might look like a retreat from ‘difficult’ to ‘easy’ art, and his intention seems to have been to undercut this difference by transcending the difference between good and bad in general.”

A very nice sounding and confusing way to say that Duchamp’s art is easy and bad. You must examine these words closely. One feels one has engaged in the art process just by studying this bold wordsmithery. It is nonsense to say something is transcending good and bad, as you are merely

removing any standard or measure completely, a convenient way to transcend having to admit it is too bad to consider as art.

“Most of the Surrealist painters joined the ‘popular’ avant garde, but they did not try to hide their own retreat from the difficult to the easy by claiming this transcendence; they apparently did not feel it was that necessary to be ‘advanced’; they believed that their kind of art was simply better than the difficult kind. Yet Duchamp’s dream of going ‘beyond’ the issue of artistic quality continued, irrational and rhetorical as that sounds.”

Astounding — an artist going beyond the idea of artistic quality. What next, a dentist transcending the need to know dentistry? What use is it?

When Abstract Expressionism appeared it became widely accepted (amazingly) that in terms of new art, value discriminations had become irrelevant. That is to say, there was no way to determine ‘good’ and ‘bad’ art. Which was very convenient for the inferior artist too lazy to apply himself. For the Modernists, this was the most edgy, avant-garde feat in art history. And the embracing of this movement by the cronyist art establishment sealed the careless destruction of a priceless tradition of painting that encapsulated European identity and moral values. I have my doubts today that many of Modernism’s early supporters would have done so if they could see the result today – that David has become the monster Goliath was framed as. So audacious relativists got away with presenting bad art by being brazen and using relativist philosophy. And Greenberg further tells us this new art is superior to all the previous art, because we had done away with standards. The world is a war of ideas. With value discriminations now irrelevant, anything was admissible. The only appreciable value becomes shock value — and they have now even run out of that. Yet still, the only art not admissible is that snobbish stuff with standards, which is to say real art.

No *Koons*, *Rothko* or *Kline* could survive without a constant diet of Greenbergian Artspeak. That, along with their audacious price tags, has fooled the public into assuming there is hidden genius at work but it remains simply a con. The Artspeak itself is so wordy, so boring to read, so deeply relativist in its morality that it is immediately dismissible to anyone who actually makes the effort to interpret what is being said. It is slippery in

that they are so deep in the zone of mental fruitcakery, where a fleeing bird can perch on any branch it invents. Regardless, it seems to have worked academically and enabled a cataclysmic hoodwinking. The astounding price tags of abstract artworks are also attributed to money laundering, a very likely scenario considering the buyers, prices and product, and an interesting bonus to a great mountain of lies.

Artspeak today is often a printed competition between critics to invent quasi-poetic explanations for the existence of bad art. To re-iterate, all the simplistic Modernist compositions, splatters, boxes and lines, and obtuse architecture, justified by the tenets of Dadaism, Abstract Expressionism and later Conceptualism actually only exist to test the creative writing of respective critics – those who with ardent wordiness find ways to elevate the outspokenly stupid and ugly into the sublime and quixotic. Modernist literature beyond criticism, such as James Joyce, dispelled Hellenic heroism and despised gallantry. Arnold Schoenberg gave us avant-garde noise-music, which never took off as much as Modernist painting, as it is just not that easy to get people to sit through a cacophony of discordant noise-art. The Bauhaus edged architecture from the meritorious Art Deco into newer territory from which we derive our horrid box-glass cities. These Moderns revelled in the newness of the self, a self that wallows in base urges and cowardice. The literature found ways to extoll only our faults, foibles, darkness and caprice.

Art was no longer there to inspire us to lofty heights but to remind us of our inherent flaws, of the insurmountable, of all that is wrong with us. Only the primitivist, the brutalist, the perverse should be extolled in art, because they represent the base ‘truth’ of a nihilist animal existence. Hanging a plainly beautiful Rembrandt or Ruskin in a contemporary gallery leads to confusion, unless it is defaced or its fragility exposed. How it must torture Modernists to be confronted by the classic art that has not yet been destroyed.

What is the end road of Artspeak? In essence it makes charlatans into artists by proving their incompetent agitprop can make it into a gallery, be sold and get good reviews. Their very existence is anathema to the hierarchical idea that there are tiers of quality in art – or in life, for that

matter. In reality, fame and money have very little to do with art, or action. Even less so in a society that does not value art.

As Richard Wagner put it:

“That the Beautiful and the Noble came not into the world for sake of profit, nay, not for the sake of even fame and recognition.”

Everything is art is a heartwarmingly inclusive notion, but the sad reality is that it makes the reverse true: *nothing is art*. The anti-reality this creates requires a tremendous effort to maintain, expended in arguments, texts, devotees and various facets of disinformation. Modern art as an idea, or a conversation, has been amazingly successful in this regard, considering how much everyone hates it.

The truth is that art is *craft*. Its level of genius is directly related to the level of long-term skill appropriated and applied. It is a rational discipline that can be learned like any other. You can write whatever Greenbergian prose you like about it, excusing away the dildos and obtuse shapes as a poor man’s intellectual symbolism, but in real art the dissertation is not necessary.

The work stands alone.

Painting

“There is no place for pretenders in the world of art”

– Donald Mackenzie

In our time, the once seemingly eternal disciplines of painting and sculpture have been dethroned to a kind of symbolic iconography. In the wake of this downfall, the other art forms (music, literature, theatre, architecture) have followed into abstraction, materialism and parody. While in some ways *painting* seems the least important of the muses (in a utilitarian sense, in comparison with, say, architecture), in other ways painting (at the root level drawing) is the most important of the disciplines. It feels like the first or prime creative impulse that is required for fully understanding all of the others – perhaps as an initial attempt at interpreting life or simply because it is the first art a child attempts, or the first that we attempt to teach.

When we think of an artist, we instinctively think of a painter.

However, the science of painting/drawing has of course been largely marginalized by Modernism and divided into illustration (commercial art, for a time) and pure abstraction (the new ‘fine’ art). Illustration was classed as an inferior practice by the new academy, though it retains the only remaining trace of traditional technique. Thus, the illustrators are prevented from reaching the lofty heights of famous ‘*Fine Artists*’ (a term one cannot help but find ironic) such as Andy Warhol, who did not even paint his own paintings, hiring other people to do so sardonically.

This downfall is, of course, despite the noble efforts of early golden age ‘illustrators’ such as N.C. Wyeth, Arthur Rackham, Aubrey Beardsley and others. Their positioning as something lesser than Picasso and Duchamp in the fine art hierarchy indicates the inevitability of their being the last of their line. It goes without saying that abstract painting can only exist as long as there remains some trace of real art to deride and attack.

“... the more one’s seeing varies from the average the greater an artist one must be. The spread of this idea among students and mediocre painters

was one of the aftermaths of the acceptance of Impressionism. It is certainly one of the most attractive ideas ever held out to struggling, untalented young people, leading them to the triumphant discovery that their very clumsiness and stupidities were really signs manua of their being artists, merely results of their 'personal vision.' In contemporary 'modern art' we see where this idea can take them. The low esteem in which the rendering of physical beauty is now held is one of the oddest peculiarities of recent æsthetic fashion...

"The ultimate importance of Modern Painting in the history of art will be seen to lie in the fact that it discredited and virtually destroyed the great technical traditions of European painting, laboriously built up through the centuries by a long succession of men of genius. The loss of these traditions has deprived our potential painters of their rightful heritage, a heritage without which it will be impossible for them to give full scope to such talent as they may possess."

– Twilight of Painting, R.H. Ives Gammell

In the good old days, painting represented the forerunner medium for a shift in style that the other disciplines followed. Early examples of all the major styles were often pioneered in painting (Art Nouveau, Romanticism, Neoclassical, etc). Indeed, the origins of art itself could be said to be found in cave paintings.

Painting and drawing is the creative impulse, the urge to imitate nature with a two-dimensional optical illusion. It is primal.

And so it is primarily on the various movements of painting that our focus should fall in tracking the timeline of decline. While there is some cross-referencing in different art movements and mediums, and certain movements encapsulate a trend across all the visual mediums — and indeed most certainly do sculpturally — a focus solely on painting will keep things clear. In all other aspects of Western visual art, literature, and music, the trend and the message is the same.

The origins of Modernism

To tackle the problem of contemporary art and expose the hazards it poses, we must properly outline its origins. We must piece apart exactly what has happened, to locate the source of the lie so that we might once again in some future time enjoy the popular vocation of art.

Bad ideas can seem like organisms with a will to live, irrespective of how ill considered they are. They can seem impossible to remove once they take root, like a tick. Their lies only end when they have killed the host organism. Whenever there is a lie at work, all efforts must be made to eradicate it.

To start, we must re-examine the Modernist art textbooks, in particular their false claim that certain late nineteenth and early twentieth century art styles are in fact Modernism, despite being its polar opposite. To call out this academic falsehood and revisionism is to reclaim sense and sanity from obfuscating buzzwording, which has brazenly confused definitions by claiming art movements to which they have no right. This is where we must dismantle staid convention to have clear definitions.

The natural power struggle for ideas is a very classical and medieval view that is ancillary to our present modes of popular thought, which teach us that ideas, like people and societies, are all magically equal in every aspect. It is a strange and childish idea but this is nevertheless the veil that conceals reality from us. The idea that Modernism is a hostile ideology imposed on us as a weapon can be hard to grasp in our confused, egalitarian age. To aid in tracing the origins and rise of such an unusual ethos, I will examine individually the popular movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries during which it appeared. Such an examination exposes the gradual intellectual degradation that has occurred, hidden or disguised as progress by the support of quasi-Marxists, dishonest conformists, money laundering materialist capitalists, and a broader public

apathy. The self-haters and opportunists who have trapped us in this cynical cycle of artistic moral cowardice, who after screeching victimhood until handed the steering wheel of this relativist locomotive have leveraged social conformity and crushing censorship to stay in power. And as mentioned, with artistic decline, rest assured, there follows all variations of societal decline.

Contrary to what you might think, which is that abstraction was eased upon us indefinitely, like the frog in the slow-boiling pot, there is actually an easily definable point of break where the traditional ends and the Modernist begins. That would obviously be the case, one supposes, as they are chalk and cheese, the latter no more than a mockery of the former.

And so there was no gradual slide: one day there was art, and the next there were kiddy-scribbles.

The day the scribbling started, a philosophy was born whose aim was to destroy, forever, the real art. Of course, all effort has been made to confound and confuse this inevitability of this war with middle-ground artists who exhibit traditional skill but also dabble in the abstract, and movements like Impressionism that truly and respectfully did push the boundaries of traditional art versus the splatter-painters who mocked everybody. But none of those midway movements alter the reality of having suffered a hoodwinkery.

Nor has this rift been properly understood in terms of what it actually is. It has somehow evaded rationalization and seems a murky fog of ill-defined terms and generalized humanism. Modernism's goal is degeneration. Traditionalism and Modernism are completely conflicting views of life and as we can see today in a Modernist environment, traditional art withers. Because we have Modernism, and because it is false and imposed, we are now publicly permitted only specific corridors of thought. In that sense, Modernism has somewhat sneakily become interwoven into the very moral and intellectual fabric of society. With the art philosophy of Modernism supported politically, academically and culturally, high art in total has been successfully toppled by the envious, the egalitarian, the nihilists and the industrialists. Modernism has survived communism — indeed, the Soviets seemed to have a limited though spirited indulgence in it, which speaks to

the theory that it is materialist capitalism which represents more wholly the death knell of quality at the bloody hands of quantity, quality's oldest enemy. And in our post-Cold War world, Modernist thinking stands ever victorious over the efforts of Promethean man.

So to examine the history, we must search for the first movement to actually fetishize abstraction. This is not Pointillism, as some may think, but Expressionism and as previously mentioned, the first culprit was Kandinsky, who I will review again in greater detail because nobody knows how starkly Modernism begins – and with whom.

Kandinsky was a painter and art theorist credited with painting one of the first purely abstract works. Whatever his motivations, it is possible they may have been somewhat innocent, as he was a painter of at least mediocre skill (for that time) and had passable works. Whether he falls into the category of a fraud or deluded egoist, judging from his background I would guess he was a mix of both. It is also possible he wanted to intentionally 'attack' tradition. But this can only be conjecture. There is an easy and visually apparent divide between art before and after Expressionism. See here an early Kandinsky work alongside a Rembrandt masterwork. The *could a child have done this?* test can be applied to the Kandinsky and the answer is emphatically *yes*.

So we can see Expressionism came right out of the gate in full abstract regalia. However, Kandinsky perfectly exemplifies an example of the 'crossover artist' of this period. That is, he was admittedly a moderately competent, talented and trained painter of the classicist tradition, who was, for whatever reason, seduced by the idea of the abstract, or wanted a vehicle to denigrate European traditionalism, or was just goofing around. Whichever it was, he willingly lent his talents to create the first well-known abstract Modernist art.

There could be many factors behind his motives, ranging from a rebellious desire for fame (attaching oneself to a popular whirlwind) to genuinely believing the philosophies of Modernism — that is, trying to prove that anything or everything is art. As with anything in life, variation is the norm. Whereas criminal characters like Duchamp were likely fraudulent crooks, Kandinsky, often warmly called the father of

Expressionism, lent a certain air of sophistication. Many of his pre-abstract works are vaguely Impressionistic and generally of good quality. But he falls over the modernist precipice and into the abyss with his works of pure Expressionism, again for the simple reason of their assumed and unprovable genius, based on principles of nothing more than pure relativism. The random patterns and geometric characters quite visibly enter the realm of ‘shock value’ — to which we are now all very well accustomed. There is nothing to distinguish them from potentially being the work of a child or half-wit. Viewers utterly untrained in art may claim to like these works but it is probably from some total naivety or a desire to be seen as intellectual in a superficial and trendy sense. There are those who simply cannot bear to see things that exhibit excellence, as it reminds them of their own failure, and seek to destroy excellence rather than improve themselves.

It is precisely his actual talent that makes Kandinsky as a bridge between the real world of traditional Western art and what came after. He applied (as others have) certain basic methods of painterly lore — primarily tricks such as composition — to create abstract works that may seem initially and mysteriously pleasing to the eye. To those not versed in the orders of higher culture, simply using primary or bright colours can be enough to get a good reaction, despite its vulgar obviousness. This, along with his ability to exhibit passable real work (as did Picasso in his early period), lent Kandinsky a sense of credence that excused the work of pure abstraction, which he and all Modernists since pretentiously describe as a journey or exploration. Regardless of what he did or its excuses, success was assured thanks to the Cultureberg mafia.

But Kandinsky’s silly shapes and squiggle paintings are a direct progenitor of our modern two-bob mass-produced chain store paintings. In the absence of standards we were left undefended before exploitative materialism, to be slowly led down the dark path. Kandinsky has much conspiratorial baggage attached to his name and his background but we must allow that it is always possible he would never have intended for his little scam to blossom into an all-encompassing art ontology. Sadly, his personal motives are not relevant for our purpose and herein the initial blame of ‘first abstract artist’ likely lies. Nowhere in the centuries of

European art history predating this do we see pointless, random abstraction considered as art.

Nowhere.

No single intentionally disjointed building erected, no conceptual random public space arrangements, no interpretive social commentary performance, no splatter paintings in galleries.

This is not to confuse random abstraction and intentional ugliness with historical primitive style, such as early Greek ceramics or Egyptian relief carving, where a heavy style was employed which was quite different from, say, a Hellenistic-derived baroque sculpture. Style is of course a completely different thing, unrelated to the narrative-as-art that is our Greenbergian art philosophy. And the more primitive, heavy styles were still æsthetic, still resonate with us, and are within keeping with traditionalism, despite being occasionally claimed by abstractionists as evidence of a sort of primitive Modernism. Often, it is merely primitive because they were primitive, not out of a bizarre forced naivety.

So to reiterate, Kandinsky can at least be said to have had a trace of talent – not like those who followed in his wake to be exonerated by Greenberg as ‘transcending good and bad’. And despite Kandinsky’s culpability, Greenberg remains the true criminal vehicle for popularising Modernist theory. Later critics and writers expanded and romanticized his bad root ideas, creating this insider cosmos of rationalising absurdity, and not one of them truly examined the root of their rotten tree, which was Greenberg’s glib and psuedo-rational abandoning of standards.

If we can clearly locate with our eyes, while stepping over the biased art history texts, the original visual art deception, then perhaps we can hope to regain what was lost, to return to the crossroads and take the other path.

A Truthful art history timeline

Conformist contemporary art historians maintain the view that the fine arts have evolved along a logical trajectory, an ascending evolution of which contemporary art is in every way a natural progression from the art of Ancient Greece, Renaissance Florence and Victorian England. For instance, within such art texts you may see a painting by Jackson Pollock (random splatters of paint) or Andy Warhol (Campbell's soup cans) on a page facing an actual classical piece by an artist such as Rembrandt or Rubens and you will be thus expected to believe that they are all of equal genius. This will be completely despite your immediate instinct for truth, which is then superseded by our youthful brainwashing, which dictates that our natural instincts are wrong and we simply do not understand or have the skills to grasp why the Pollock painting is genius, despite looking childish and ugly. A great many further people scarcely require a brainwashing as they are mainly waiting to be told what to think. If anything, the implication then becomes that the Modern art on the first page is superior to the older work, as it is so good it defies our senses (which tell us it is bad). This further opens the doorway to reams of Artspeak explaining how the Pollock has done away with the shackles of representation and that it is the now, while

Rembrandt was the then. This is to any independent thinker of the remotest intellectual honesty an act of the crudest doublethink. The association is implied, dreamily, but to the questioning mind takes much indoctrination to establish convincingly: a Rothko on the same page as a Titian, as though the parallels were obvious. There are no parallels. In reality, Titian would have called for Rothko to be jailed, or at least placed in a medieval shame helmet. To those reading these Modernist establishment art books (all of them) and not versed in the actual craft of painting – which is more people than ever now that drawing skills are not taught in schools – the genius of the abstract is implied, despite our instincts telling us it is nothing. By shifting the focus from actually making beautiful art to creating a hidden (generally political) message that must be interpreted from the abstraction, students can be kept busy playing in a funny rat-maze with its own reward and punishment system. When they open their textbooks and see the Cole landscape beside the deKooning, deKooning's genius is implied and remembered, if not garnered. It is purely a system of authority, genius by association being a subtle but effective sleight of hand. A trusting population simply does not expect to be deceived by its authority figures and so most people merely turn the page and accept that the world is a very funny place, and from there the lie of implied genius passes as a social norm.

Despite Kandinsky being the first breakthrough abstractionist and thereby the first Modernist, if we are to follow the academic art history texts and online sources generally agree that the root of the break with tradition, the very wellspring of modern art, begins with Romanticism. Of course, this is *nonsense* that is again provable with observation and reason, despite 'academic' sources. In no way whatsoever does Romanticism lead logically into Cubism or Dadaism, or any of that rubbish, as Romanticism is entirely legitimate, retains beauty values and is the deserving heir of previous art movements. This is an example of typical social engineering lies, compelled by cowardly anxiety that shapes the bizarre quasi-religious belief in equality-rhetoric. History is exploited to peddle a false genius by association, simply by saying and doubling down on the proposition that Romanticism is the evolutionary precursor to squiggles for Greenbergian intellectual reasons. It is absolute nonsense, though widely believed because our elites hate our history and the masses still trust them. If, as is claimed

by our art institutions, Modernism actually is the logical descendant of the genuine high art that is Romanticism (for the trite reason that Romanticism was also rebellious), then Modernism must be legitimate, despite our eyes telling us they are visually and ideologically opposed. The Modernists merely say it, then repeat it until it becomes socially true. Real truth means nothing to them. The side-by-side examples presented here should help to make it abundantly clear. Romanticism is objectively firmly grounded in true painterly skill. The Abstract Expressionist painting alongside it is not and is not related in any way to the Romantic painting, other than to juxtapose its high beauty standards with outrageously cheap shock value. The Romantic painting requires no further narrative to exist and be admired, the Modernist has no reason to exist other than as backdrop to creative writing defending it. We are to believe the two styles exhibited here are of the same overall movement?



Hardanger fjord Hans Fredrik Gude 1825–1903 & *Composition VII*—according to Kandinsky, the most complex piece he ever painted (1913)

Could it be put any more starkly that we have been swindled?

The claim that Romanticism is a precursor and relative to Modernism rests in it being an imaginative counter-reaction to Victorian *realism*, which in truth was itself quite good and not at all like our modern-day paint-by-numbers photo realism.

But this is the Modernist's duplicitous reasoning: *Romanticism can be defined as somewhat rebellious in its era, therefore because Modernists are the ultimate art rebels due to their squiggles and boxes, these movements*

are then one and the same, and Romanticism is the first Modernism. All rather laughable, is it not?

The official Modernist art history timeline from Romanticism then usually ignores or skips over the Pre-Raphaelites and the Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) period, links through briefly with Impressionism and finally leaps headlong into Expressionism (the true root of Modernism), and so forth. This biased Modernist timeline finally terminates in the abysmal *Abstract Expressionism*, which by its definition may be considered the penultimate movement of Modernism since it is defined by visual abstraction as a rule, existing as a fixed state of ‘rebellion’ but without progression. A permanent state of rebellion quickly becomes something you need to rebel against. Abstract Expressionism is where art goes to die. From the enthronement of Abstract Expressionism onward, all representational art has been characterized as ‘illustration’, fine art being about liberal narrative applied to abstraction or shock value, vindicating human weakness.

By virtue of the ridiculous claim of Romanticism being an early form of Modernism, most art movements historically intermediate are considered Modernist to academics. This is a woeful miscarriage of history and sullies the reputation of the very fine and classically trained Romantic, Pre-Raphaelite, Impressionist or Jugendstil painters and sculptors, as well as Art Deco architects who would no doubt, should they be raised from their graves, be agape in horror at the culturally suicidal and pathetic monstrosities we now call fine buildings. Associating Romanticism and Impressionism with Expressionism and Cubism, and so forth, is a mistaken and opportunist claim, an act of intellectual hoodwinking that implicates totally abstract movements within the realm of representational works or art with classical values. One is talented and hard-working and the other is a hoax. We must label abstraction and anti-art – and we must call it Modernism. Romanticism was wildly original and also partly a reaction to the industrial revolution. But it was by no means a solid break with tradition and where it wandered into anything resembling the abstract, for lack of a better word (imaginative style is more appropriate), it did so purely within the context of a total mastery of technical skill in representation, imbued with individualistic and exaggerated drama. There was no total abstraction for the sake of shock-value narrative. The same could be said for

Impressionism (though a few were Modernists) with its strange but masterful visual illusions. Neither of these movements could be mastered without a firm grasp of classical theory and visual technique.

This is not necessarily so with Expressionism and those movements that followed. As tracing the lineage is an important step in understanding exactly where we went afoul, we must describe briefly each of the major movements of this period leading up to the unnecessary disaster that was Expressionism.

1) Romanticism (1780–1850): Noted for imagination and individuality, glorification of nature and myth.



Wounded Cuirassier Leaving the Field of Battle, 1814, Théodore Géricault.

“Romanticism had been, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a revolt against the effects of the Industrial Revolution and bourgeois values, while emphasizing individual, subjective experience, the sublime, and the supremacy of ‘Nature’, as subjects for art, and revolutionary, or radical extensions of expression... The movement validated strong emotion as an authentic source of æsthetic experience ... especially that which is experienced in confronting the sublimity of untamed nature and its picturesque qualities. Romanticism reached beyond the rational and Classicist ideal models to elevate a revived medievalism.”

– Wikipedia description of Romanticism

The description skips over any mention of what is obvious to any viewer of Romantic works — that every single artist associated with the movement worked within the framework of classical representational methods. Their works stand out as being masterful, imbued with emotion and imagination but in no way abstract or without beauty values.

2) The Pre-Raphaelites (1848–1920): Sought a return to the detail and complex colour/compositions of Quattrocento (or pre-Mannerist) Italian art.



La Belle Dame sans Merci 1893, John William Waterhouse.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was an imaginative, rebellious movement that opposed the dominant trend of industrial Victorian England, disliking its mechanistic approach to classical poses and compositions. They were influenced by the writings of the art critic John Ruskin (1819 to 1900). Regardless of their resistance to classicism, technical skill was in their retinue. What they would have considered stark realism is to us today positively flamboyant compared with the sad, photography inspired realism we see from most of our current realists. The Pre-Raphaelites were certainly not abstractionists but practised externalizing a bohemian beauty that was somewhat Gothic and somewhat Romantic. Their artistic outlook was medieval but they used the full retinue of learned painterly skills available in their day – and were masters. Pre-Raphaelites are not associated with

Modernism at all and merely existed in that era between Romanticism and Expressionism.

3) Impressionism (1865–1885): Capturing or expressing illusions of natural light.



Claude Monet, Woman with a Parasol - Madame Monet and Her Son (Camille and Jean Monet), 1875. An example of good Impressionism.

Impressionism originated with a group of Paris-based artists who were radicals in their time. They constructed their pictures from freely brushed colours that took precedence over lines and contours, following the example of painters such as Eugène Delacroix and J. M. W. Turner (Romanticism). By re-creating the light and colour effect of the subject in the eye, rather than delineating the details as the Form of shape, and by creating their own unique techniques, Impressionism was truly innovative, technical, traditional and interesting. However, academics consider Impressionism a precursor of various painting styles, including Neo-Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism and Cubism. In the way Impressionism is related to any of them, it is only so in the sense of a vague imitation co-opted and dissipated into nothingness by applied Modernist gimmick and abstraction.

Impressionists did veer more strongly into what you might call the visually abstract but only through sheer deftness of ability in an effort to portray the subject honestly and uniquely. Sadly, the most famous Impressionist, Van Gogh, is more Modernist than many of his contemporaries, and despite having many fine paintings is largely celebrated for his poorer works in the same exploitative gesture as we are now well accustomed to, and in that sense does not deserve his fame. Overall, Impressionist visual trickery was so clever and intense that it did perhaps invite the embrace of Modernists with their goofy aggrandizing as penultimate visual ‘revolutionaries’, leaving academic opinion ripe for the trickery and opportunism of what followed. The legitimate stylistic successors to Impressionism are Art Nouveau and Art Deco. They were legitimate movements that should have continued to evolve into new styles but were cut short when Modernism swallowed the art world whole.

Before Art Nouveau appeared, however, we have the inception of the first abstract style, Expressionism.

4) Expressionism (1900–1935): Abstraction with excuses, typically things like ‘emotion over form’, etc.

Expressionism’s typical trait is to present the world solely from a subjective perspective (solipsism), distorting it to supposedly evoke moods or ideas. Expressionist artists sought to express meaning or emotional experience



Wassily Kandinsky, 1910, Landscape with Factory Chimney.

rather than physical reality. This is, in their own words, again pure manipulation by those with high verbal intelligence. Fauvism is another movement associated with Expressionism but is not really worth mentioning, not unless you want to pretend you see a difference between different shapeless, colourful blobs.

With Expressionism, we find a theme of deeply believed relativism and solipsism that could not have previously entered the human psyche as a serious philosophy. Only in the spreading black soil of post-French Revolution materialist values can Modernism find its nourishment, among the easily directed petty rancor of bourgeois jealousies. To take the first step to accepting splatter painting as high art, or art of any kind, is an enormous and misguided leap into chaos. While the sensibilities involved can seem mysterious, these early Modernist artists were self-centred, purposefully refuting reality, or primal instincts, in favour of false attention won with juvenile audacity. In short, Expressionism was the first movement to wilfully attempt a total discarding of artistic technique in place of a pure emotive shock value. How could they guise their scribbles in mock intellectualism? Initially, by associating themselves parasitically with more honest movements like Romanticism. With the aforementioned trick of association, Expressionists cosied up to artists (posthumously) whose brushes they were not worthy of cleaning. Audacity triumphed over integrity. Most importantly, Romantic, Impressionist and Jugendstil painters who Modernists parasitically absorbed worked within a mental framework of traditionalism, hard work, sacred geometry, visual illusion and emotive naturalism. Meanwhile those lesser Expressionist or Fauvist minds, when confronted with Romantic mild and imaginative abstraction, seemingly assumed, whether by moronic innocence or wilful culpability, that they could skip the laborious efforts of craft and talent and go straight to the abstraction – which even if rendered childishly could be shrouded in a literature of mystery. Their most important weapon was once again volumes of indecipherable Greenbergian Artspeak.

5) Art Nouveau (1890–1910): inspired by natural forms and structures.



Art Nouveau artist Eugène Grasset: poster for Grafton Galleries, 1893.

Art Nouveau or Jugendstil is an interesting and short-lived cross-European style of decorative, architectural and applied arts that can be considered both a ‘total’ art style and a counter-reaction to Modernism and the industrial revolution.

According to their philosophy, art should be a way of life and should always suggest or emulate nature. The art across all mediums was instantly recognizable as being inspired by natural patterns and structures, languid floral forms and virile flourishes.

For many well-off Europeans, it was possible to live in a house inspired by and completely fitted with Art Nouveau decor and objects: furniture, silverware, fabrics, crockery, jewellery, cigarette cases, clothing, wallpaper, etc. Artists desired to combine the fine arts and the applied arts, even for utilitarian objects, and for a time succeeded. It was beautiful for as long as it lasted and is mostly discounted today by the establishment, no doubt because it was both æsthetic and idealistic.

6) Art deco (1920–1940): glamorous industrial Neoclassicism.



An Art Deco world: The U.S. Navy airship USS Akron (ZRS-4) flying over the southern end of Manhattan, New York, New York, United States, circa 1931-1933.

Art Deco was sort of the opposite of the languid fluidity of Art Nouveau, being quite starkly Neoclassical in influence and somewhat reductionist, although in a pleasing and even grandiose style. Modernist painting had become popular by this period and there are certain (not all) 'Art Deco' paintings that should be considered Modernist as they are dabbling in the abstract and the tendrils of degeneracy were creeping in. However, in terms of architecture and sculpture, particularly, Art Deco proved to be a stimulating example of industrial Neoclassicism. The Modernists try to claim Art Nouveau and Art Deco as Modernist styles due to their historical proximity and their uniqueness. This is, of course, more deceit as they are clearly not abstract, they require no narratives and have traditional precedent. Art Deco architecture in particular is associated with Modernism as it straddles the line between Neoclassicism and Postmodernism, partly due to its success in a more targeted or conservative use of detail, which was purely a taste consideration at the time, and highly æsthetic, but later exploited by primitivists and brutalists to discard detail and decoration completely. The German reductionist architectural movement known as Bauhaus (1919 to 1933) stole much of Art Deco's streamlined look but exploitatively and mostly incompetently, evolving into the stark and sterile architecture we see today. Art Nouveau and Art Deco

are proof to me that we can have totally new styles by following the old rules and seeking new inspiration in the abundance of nature and history. But you must have order and must apply discrimination.

Impressionism and Art Nouveau had many great artists. Art Nouveau is often considered controversial, even disliked by many traditionalists as too fussy or pretty somehow. It may have had a certain Japanese influence but it was never a rejection of classical geometry, as has been postulated. Quite the opposite, Art Nouveau, in its adulation of nature, has a highly advanced sense of symmetria – so advanced it may not be noticeable at first. As a style, it is quite different from previous movements and could have blossomed into further excellent variation if Modernism and mass-production had not crushed the art world beneath an iron boot.

Modernism, what is it really?

Now, to attempt to define the wilfully indefinable, we should examine shortened Wikipedia descriptions of Modernism and Postmodernism. These are the parent terms to all the philosophies I endeavor to ridicule. But these philosophies are also all facets of the same root philosophy, which is no philosophy at all, merely an Artspeak exercise. Modernism and Postmodernism are virtually indistinguishable because their root goal is to present intentional nonsense – and chaos and nonsense is very hard to categorize.

Taken from a Wikipedia description:

“Modern art includes artistic works produced during the period extending roughly from the 1860s to the 1970s... The term is usually associated with art in which the traditions of the past have been thrown aside in a spirit of experimentation. A tendency toward abstraction is characteristic of much modern art. More recent artistic production is often called Contemporary art or Postmodern art...”

“In art Modernism explicitly rejects the ideology of realism, and makes use of the works of the past, through the application of reprise, incorporation, rewriting, recapitulation, revision and parody in new forms. Modernism also rejects the lingering certainty of Enlightenment thinking... In general, the term Modernism encompasses the activities and output of those who felt the ‘traditional’ forms of art, architecture, literature, and daily life were becoming outdated in the new economic, social, and political conditions of an emerging fully industrialized world... A salient characteristic of Modernism is self-consciousness. This self-consciousness often led to experiments with form and work that draws attention to the processes and materials used (and to the further tendency of abstraction).”

At Sotheby's in 2013, a record auction price (\$43.8 million) was achieved for *Barnett Newman's Onement VI*, which is nothing more than a canvas painted blue. Not even worth reproducing in this book for the purpose of exhibit, I can merely describe it: *it is just blue*. \$43.8million.

The above Wikipedia description does not require any embellishment. Modernists take it as a given 'good' that smug attacks on tradition or historical standards are the goal. Depending on when you check, the Wikipedia descriptions for Modernism, Conceptualism and Abstract Expressionism change intermittently, adapting and writhing like coiling serpents, evading scrutiny by slightly altering the language of their meaning. At my time of writing, this was the published interpretation. When they do change the descriptions, it is to incorporate newly developed buzzwords that more heavily layer and cloak the true meaning. The confusing strata of terms that reference other terms requiring research to decipher are merely deceptive layers of make-up on their evil pig of chaos.

What is Postmodernism?

Postmodernism, for all its claim to revolutionary originality is nothing more than Modernism disguised in looser vagaries and non sequiturs. I do not bother to distinguish between them or, as I have mentioned, take seriously their irrational goalposts as to what is Modernist or Postmodernist. Expressionism was the first abstract movement, wherein paintings were intentionally unpolished or graceless, and later undefinable. There is no logical link from other movements of that time into Expressionism, there is simply art before the Expressionist hoax and art after the Expressionist hoax.

Postmodernism as a word is more high verbal intelligence propaganda, as modern means in the current fashion but yesterday's modern is today's old news, so the term modern art is technically out of date. While it seems obvious that we should refer to whatever we are doing now as modern, technically modern art refers specifically to the first half of the twentieth century and thus they prefer to use Postmodern to describe the art of today. The terms contemporary, modern, and postmodern are interchangeable definitions for all post-Expressionist abstract art. Here is the official Wikipedia definition of Post Modernism:

“Postmodernism is ... largely a reaction to the assumed certainty of scientific or objective efforts to explain reality. In essence, it is based on the position that reality is not mirrored in human understanding of it, but is rather constructed as the mind tries to understand its own personal reality. In the postmodern understanding, interpretation is everything; reality only comes into being through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually. In contrast to modernism, postmodernist thought often emphasizes constructivism, idealism, pluralism, relativism and scepticism in its approaches to knowledge and understanding.”

So as we can see, pretty much more of the usual Artspeak. This is the jargon that founds their anti-reality, when Hellenic idealism is put into reverse. Postmodernists war with a concept of the academic, though they have themselves been the academy for close to a century. There is nothing left to rebel against, a traditionalist art movement would be the only true act of rebellion left available.

“Their unobtrusive perfection (past masters), a logical component of what they were aiming at, has been greatly derided by painters whose talent made them unsympathetic to those aims This misdirected derision has subsequently been amplified and used to discredit beautiful execution in general so that, in the minds of the many, fine workmanship has become synonymous with smugness and painstaking stupidity. At the present time any semblance of neatness in the application of pigment may cause a picture to be contemptuously dismissed as academic. To any one who has tried to emulate the workmanship of the great academic painters such an appraisal will seem strange indeed.”

– Twilight of Painting, R.H. Ives Gammell

As mentioned, Postmodernism is nothing more than a lazy attempt to pretend there was an ongoing creative evolution beyond Modernism. Everyone knows what we mean when we speak of modern art — we mean bad taste, confusion and shock value. There has been no art style evolution, almost no genuine vocation of art, since we embraced Modernism, because it is a rat-maze. Its variances are all equally insane and it is those we must now look at for a clear understanding of the history.

Modernist Movements since Expressionism

It goes without saying that allowing the initial abstract absurdity into the house of art only accelerated a stampede of mediocre exploitation. How could it not? To this day, every splatter painting that sells for over a million excites a non-artist to try their hand at painting with a cry of: “I could do that!” Once we have established a philosophy of meaninglessness, the way lies open to anything that can provide further shock value. Exactly how relatively few artists, critics and academics pushed through an ethos of anti-art so quickly does seem astounding. One of the Modernists weapons certainly since the world wars is that appeals to traditionalism or order can be shouted down as authoritarian, due to them involving rules and standards. Traditionalism is not open minded enough in regards the flowering of new absurdities.

1) Dada (1917–1950): Intentionally ‘ridiculous’ art, supposedly exploring the unconscious.



Grand opening of the first Dada exhibition, Berlin, 1920. The figure hanging from the ceiling is an effigy of a German officer with a pig's head. From left to right: Raoul Hausmann, Hannah Höch, August Fraz, Dr. O., George Grosz, John Heartfield.

Otto Burchard, Johannes Baader, Wieland Herzfelde, Margarete Herzfelde, Otto Schmalhausen, George Grosz and John Heartfield. Heavily political and overtly leftist from the start.

Dadaism was probably one of the most foolish and melodramatic of all modern art movements. The definition of Dadaism is slightly more antagonistic than Postmodernism, though it is basically the same muddle, if not even generally more obtuse and lazy:

“Dada: a nihilistic art movement (especially in painting) that flourished in Europe beginning in 1916; based on irrationality and negation of the accepted laws of beauty.”

Marcel Duchamp, by introducing in 1917 a urinal as an object of art in a Parisian gallery, relativised art by supposedly stating that beauty, or truth for that matter, is only in the eye of the beholder and that the question of whether an object is a piece of art or just a piece of junk depends on the social context and our readiness to accept that context as art.

Extremely meaningful stuff, if you are a teenage anarchist. For those unfamiliar with Dada, yes – it was quite simply a urinal. Astonishingly, contemporary art history was to prove him right. Duchamp’s gesture has since been repeated a million times in installations all over the world, in various incarnations of the same meaningless, relativist principle.

Dada was possibly the first adroitly populist anti-art movement and rapidly garnered a certain following (of the usual bored bohemians). Duchamp was an opportunist and a charlatan made famous for his wilful flaunting of shock tactics. In addition to displaying a urinal as sculpture, he made his name by painting a moustache on a copy of the Mona Lisa. He continually claimed to be able to “paint like a master impressionist” although no evidence for this was ever exhibited. Nobody seems particularly interested in trying to seek it either (even his defenders probably know it is a lie) and his genius is taken as rote. Indeed, his piece *The Large Glass (1915-23)* in the Philadelphia Museum of Art Collection shows no indication of any painting skill whatsoever. When the piece was broken in transit (it is indeed painted on glass) he claimed it looked better broken before slapping on his usual exorbitant price tag. This latter gesture is perhaps his only true genius — the audacity of the price is of tantamount

importance and encourages the listless wealthy to compete over invisible clothes of intangible value.

And so Duchamp really seems the ideal candidate for title of the original modern art fraudster. Where Kandinsky might have been very much the same, we cannot be sure he was not just slightly touched. There is every chance he was Duchamp's equal in chicanery but we should give him the benefit of the doubt, considering he at least had the decency to actually learn how to paint reasonably before opting to peddle nonsense – as opposed to Duchamp, who produced nothing tangible, ever, apart from egotistical boasts.

Duchamp's name is, of course, spoken of in hallowed whisper in modern institutions to this day, though any description of his process is meaningless, convoluted and laughably contrite. His sole trick seems to have been in taking advantage of the encroaching popularity of relativism after the First World War as a way to stick it to the bourgeoisie, as it were. Which he did with psychopathic zeal.

2) Cubism (1905–1920): Depicting subjects from multiple viewpoints at once.



The Chicago Picasso, a 50-foot high public Cubist sculpture. Donated by Picasso to the people of Chicago. Lucky them.

The modern artist adores Primitivism, such as most Cubism, as its lack of overt excellence allows for guilt-free admiration, like adoring a sickly underdog, and their mediocrity is inclusive, as it requires no elitist special intelligence. The very idea of ‘lesser culture’ is a misnomer to the cultural relativist where every idea, person and civilization are magically the same.

Braque and Picasso are the two most notable Cubists and despite Picasso’s fame, Braque was actually the better Cubist (laughable as it is to bother distinguishing) in that he was not quite as simplistic or reliant on shock value. Of course, for both their artistic goal was obediently Modernist: to attack the foundations of Western art. In their case this was done by applying the gimmick advantage of Modernism to abandon painterly retinue, namely the perspective and illusion of depth by always emphasizing flat, planar surface. It was pure gimmick.

Picasso was a con-artist. One look at his vulturous mug tells you that — it is that smug, over-earnest stare that Modernists practice so hard, daring you to challenge their random boxes and splashes, defying reality with haughty airs. He simply looks corrupt and his kiddy paintings are not much worth talking about. It is notable that he had some good early works, not great genius but not bad, and along the way he caught wind of Modernist trends and realized he could sell paintings just as well by not finishing them — indeed, by reducing them to a gaudy simplicity, which has the same ‘look what I can get away with’ impact as Duchamp’s urinal. The only good thing to come out of Cubism was, somewhat strangely but worth mentioning, a style of cartooning and animation in the 1950s and 60s which had a certain faux-Cubist styling and always reminds me of the that era.

Again, merely look at Picasso’s most famous works and ask yourself: what exactly is so good about this? Picasso was the first and possibly most widely known celebrity Modernist and the go-to painter for the affected credulous desiring to signal leftist abstraction-worship (cultural masochism). In 1944, Picasso joined the French Communist Party and was handed a Stalin Peace Prize by the Soviets in 1950. He was, until his death, a loyal member of the Communist Party. Picasso stated in a 1945 interview:

“I am a Communist and my painting is Communist painting.” Many of Picasso’s early champions were doing so for political reasons, like Anthony Blunt, Surveyor of the King’s pictures. Blunt, later a convicted Soviet spy, would claim that Picasso was a greater painter than Sir Joshua Reynolds.

3) Abstract Expressionism (1940s–present): Pure abstraction for its own sake.

Though arguably spawned in the rebellious absurdity of Expressionism and perfected in Dadaism, there is a movement that perhaps best encapsulates the ‘soul’ of the contemporary art we are likely to witness in our present-day galleries and media. This movement is the final summation of all the above listed epistemologies and their narcissistic deconstructionism. This, coupled with its extension Conceptualism, is the dead end of abstraction in visual arts, where you cannot get any farther away from classical theory and technique. It is a graveyard trap of mental cynicism that we have yet to find a way out of and is commonly known as Abstract Expressionism, which can only be considered a broadening of the scope of allowable bad taste. It is an expansion of Modernist non-ideas that breaks down barriers between Fine Art and exploitation. In many respects thus the defining creed of Modernism in all forms, the Miriam Webster definition of Abstract Expressionism is as follows:

“An artistic movement emphasizing an artist’s liberty to convey attitudes and emotions through nontraditional and usually nonrepresentational means.”

On its face, this sounds somewhat scholarly, ubiquitous and certainly not sinister. But however innocent it sounds, its true meaning and intent is malevolent, it wilfully defies description as it is nothing more than a simple play on words, conveying only the sparsest interpretation of real meaning.

Artists of the abstract movement seek to exist on a platform of nothing more than rebelliousness. Thus, the definitions of these various movements have, through time, become increasingly vapid, bolstered childishly by mere verbose tautology. However flowery its language may be, Abstract Expressionism is a deeply irrational ethos and ultimately a truly disastrous sentiment. Let us examine what their manifesto really means and why it is

absurd on every level. To start, the whole premise of this movement's existence is apparently based on protecting an artist's 'liberty':

"Liberty to convey attitudes and emotions through nontraditional and usually nonrepresentational means."

While this is very democratic of them, in terms of art it describes the artist's liberty to do what? The answer is to do whatever he wants – to control the definition of art himself and, thereby, for the rest of us. And not just at a personal level but in terms of the limits of his success. The artist insists on being recognized as an artist no matter what he does. He is conveying attitudes and emotions, as they like to say — nothing but a muddled and narcissistic sentimentalism.

If that were not bad enough, the definition of Abstract Expressionism claims this must be achieved by non-traditional means. Again, this is both vague and suggestive, the intonation being a freedom from staid mores, more post-war relativism. This means that the work must be somehow apart from what is considered traditional art, which is essentially stylized representational drawing, design, painting and sculpture. While this rebellion is in fact impossible and undesirable within the context of art (the result being the destruction of art itself), the Abstract Expressionists are in a perpetual state of telling us about their endless rebelling against a tradition. This while all the while never becoming a tradition themselves, regardless of the how many decades they accrue. And while these solipsists rule tyrannically over art itself, the average non-artistic person has no idea that actual skill or talent in painting or sculpture no longer has any value.

For how long can something be considered non-traditional before it becomes the tradition? Apparently, a very long time. This unnatural phenomenon is further proof that Modernism is animated by an inorganic engine of deceitful propaganda. Generations have passed barely cogent of what the original art tradition ever was. The idea that art is actually not a random expression of liberal political belief in chaotic abstract format is a lost notion. Proper techniques in oil painting in particular are all but lost. Modernist movements, particularly Abstract Expressionism, are the establishment itself, the very academic dinosaur they propose to exist solely in contrast to.

In short, the Abstract Expressionist exists only as an effrontery to a tradition that no longer exists (academically or in the accepted echelon and media). So this supplanting tradition, based on only a juvenile rebelliousness against nothing, is indeed its own foundation and to keep its position as the reigning abstract tyrant of the visual arts it continually evades further revolution (which would, in a perfect world, be epitomized by a returning classicism) by increasing its shock value. That is, gradually exhibiting increasing levels of shock, sexual innuendo, childishness, anti-aesthetics, cynically ugly, asymmetrical and culturally hysterical art. Essentially, it just grows ever more horrid and vapid, in irrational attempts to out-think the confines of being pitted against normal and organically occurring staples of art.

Literally *'increasing the stupidity'* is the secret credo of evolution in our contemporary arts.

When you see a smirking mockery in the face of Modernist artists such as Koons or Warhol, rest assured they have some awareness of their role as wilful opportunists (Warhol in particular was openly cynical). They are the enemy of every child who picks up a pencil and finds an inner faculty or enjoyment in drawing. This new art they represent is a shameful black mark on the book of history and we should be ashamed to have let ourselves come to this.

To examine the Abstract Expressionist proclamation yet further: *"Emphasizing a liberty to convey emotions via non representation."* Representation is visual art, in any sense.

So the complex stupidity of this could be reworded as: *"It can only be fine art if it is not recognizable as art."*

This is a stupefying statement, brazenly deceitful to conceive, let alone make. So we establish, by the Abstract Expressionists' own definitions, that true elevated art should defy any preconceived notion of artfulness. It seems conclusive to me, as though witnessing their horrific works were not intellectually insulting enough, that the poisonously lazy and duplicitous literature excusing it is like a secondary slap to the face from another direction. To have allowed into the core of our advanced civilization these

obvious lies has been a tremendous and suicidal foolishness. Is it any wonder we now find ourselves a self-loathing civilization, whitewashing its own glorious history? We have entrusted to this effete and nihilist philosophy our very culture, our living spaces, our architecture, our art prizes and our institutions of learning. What awful irresponsible elites can we blame for this lack of proper stewardship? The scale of the treachery is astounding. Our art exists as a negation of art itself against nature and common sense. Abstract Expressionism is, of all the movements, the perfect summation of this Modernist lunacy at large, the whole of which is nothing more than the manifestation of an imposed self-loathing. It is something that can only afflict an affluent and indolent civilization.

Because there is by its definition no way to define or recognize Abstract Expressionist art as good or bad, that upon the face of it should be an indication to sensible people that it is nonsense. The warning bells that go off when one sees late-night TV psychics and knife salesmen should be blaring.

Very few classically trained artists are brave enough to attack the accepted norms of Abstract Expressionism but it does happen. In the previous century, no less than Salvador Dali (a talented Surrealist, best described as artists with one foot in tradition and one in Modernism) referred to what was happening as: *“This grandiose tragedy that we call modern art.”* By no means a conventional or purely traditional painter himself, Dali’s paintings did employ a strong classical skill attributed to his study of the old masters and their techniques. In his book *Dali on Modern Art*, he launched a vitriolic, opinionated attack and made very negative evaluations of such examples as Picasso and Cézanne. He reserved his praise for the classics, notably Vermeer and Raphael. Other dissenting voices can still be found in the wilderness of the art world, though usually accompanied by grovelling apologies for their heretical views, fearful the egalitarian boot will stamp them out in a crush of media criticism following accusations of ‘fascism’ at any moment. A good example is the glibly self-titled Conceptual Surrealist artist *Robert Williams*, who has a kind of pulp art style. Here he refers to his own early experiences:

“Draughtsmanship and craftsmanship are discouraged. For maybe 50 years the established art world has been in a very loose form of abstraction. It’s like an absolute revolt against anything to go with a graphic language. When I went to art school in the Sixties, the predominating art of that decade was Abstract Expressionism, which was, to me, a very limited thing. To a lot of people it was a free form of revolution, but to me it was like a very confining thing. You were limited to working with a small pallet of earth colors and maybe blue.

“Draughtsmanship and craftsmanship were really discouraged. When I entered art school my head was full of EC images, Salvador Dali, and other things that put a stop to you right away in art school. My peer group pressured me, referring to me as an illustrator. It’s very derogatory to refer to someone as an illustrator. For maybe 50 years the established art world has been in a very loose form of abstraction. In the last 10 or 15 years it’s just been ridiculous. It’s formed itself over into situations like minimalism and conceptualism, and it’s got further and further away from a graphic language. It’s like an absolute revolt against anything to go with a graphic language. So in my generation, and two or three generations before me, people who were technically capable stayed out of fine art. They went into illustration, movie posters, and this whole variety of other sub-arts.’”

We have only to re-read the Abstract Expressionist manifesto to realize it represents the fact that art has become anything other than art. Not just the public but many working artists today do not fully grasp that this is the modern art concept. It is easier to accept superficially simply because it has been the norm for so long. Why or how people in the heyday of Western art never had to face competition from the guy with the unpainted canvas or the crudely constructed sculpture of masturbating hobos, I am not sure. I imagine those classical artists simply would not feel our democratic urge to plumb those Godless depths. But since this awful idea, this ugly-worship has taken hold, it is with us until we take pains to stamp it out. What we might hope to achieve, without having to rewire everyone’s mind, is to topple Abstract Expressionism and Conceptualism from the top of the art institution hierarchy and place them in a different non-art-related discipline, where they deserve to be. Not that they deserve to exist at all but if some people really want to waste their time on anti-art, maybe closeted avenues

should be provided for malcontents and misanthropes to worship each other's colourful splatters and straight lines.

And if you thought the unpainted canvas was as low as the art establishment might dare stoop (I will not at this time go into the many variations of human excrement art), there is the bizarre incident of animals selling work — and not at insubstantial prices. Invariably their 'work' falls into the unadulterated genius of our darling Abstract Expressionism.

No doubt every barnyard is a potential Rothko studio. You should know there have been both elephants and apes praised for their 'paintings'. For example, as a hoax, a zookeeper exhibited paintings by a monkey called Peter, under the name *Pierre Brassau*. A prominent critic at the opening was quoted saying:

“Brassau paints with powerful strokes, but also with clear determination. His brush strokes twist with furious fastidiousness. Pierre is an artist who performs with the delicacy of a ballet dancer.”

Lovely Artspeak. When later confronted with the revelation that the artist was a monkey, the critic replied: “Still the best painting in the exhibition.”

A monkey is pronounced a painter and we are to revel in the ironic absurdity, or delight in ourselves for being so free of discrimination. We have our 10 minutes' hate towards tradition and profess love for our new Western values by lauding a painting by a lower primate. Crowned in a court of insanity, it proves nothing can stand before the manufactured plebeian opinion machine at hands of audacious maniacs — those who, in their rabid relativism, are willing to praise as genius the paintings of an animal that has no clue what it is doing, while demeaning the creative work of painters who strive in the classical tradition. Surely the animal painting must even be demeaning to the abstractionists? The ones who aren't charlatans but actually think their random splatters are masterstrokes? Or does nobody actually care and we are all being open about our lies?

So that sums up Abstract Expressionism. Beyond that point there is truly nothing, a void. Though there are labelled movements that we will cover, it is a lawless terrain where nonsense, ugliness, weaker human

frailties, perversions and European guilt are even more pronounced. The tear in the fabric between the past and the present only widens. There is left to us to cover now only the naked, goofy, schizophrenia-party that is *Conceptualism*.

4) Conceptualism (1960–present): Concepts take precedence over traditional aesthetic and material. Essentially Abstract Expressionism but with even less need to actually make anything.

“All of the significant art of today stems from Conceptual art. This includes the art of installation, political, feminist and socially directed art.”
– Sol LeWitt

“I thought conceptual art was a joke.”
– Gian Carlo Menotti

Abstract Expressionism evolves on our timeline into a few equally nonsensical children, the most notable being Conceptualism, which suffers from even further inflated pricing and narcissism. As with all Modernism, it has the same basis in attacking true art, and the official definition of Conceptualism is pretty much the same as Abstract Expressionism, only expanded slightly as follows:

“Intermediate between nominalism and realism, that universals exist only within the mind and have no external or substantial reality. A doctrine that is concerned with the intellectual engagement of the viewer through conveyance of an idea and negation of the importance of the art object itself.”

This is fairly typical Greenbergian jargon, an empty but colourful use of expensive words — pleasing to those who abhor true philosophy in favour of mysterious, inflated statements. Not completely meaningless but certainly not profound by any measure, it sounds like more rarefied solipsism. The conceptualist movement is the darling of such hopeless luminaries as the hapless shrieking bag lady Yoko Ono, famous for destroying The Beatles and for her terrifying squawking. If you ever walk into a gallery room and are confronted by hipsters involved in a *happening*, dreary Conceptualism might be involved. Conceptualism’s baffling ethos is

somehow defined by galleries of strewn litter and preserved fish. Anything, really, that you might imagine – except actual painting or sculpture. They prefer the trippy domain of what is pretentiously coined ‘installation art’, whereby a viewer is supposedly drawn into a piece via some cheesy and contrived ambience. I should not even use the word trippy as that at least suggest an interesting psychedelic experience, whereas these experiences are trite and drab. An example of a Conceptualist piece is Martin Creed Turner Prize winning *The Lights Going On and Off* (an empty room in which the lights go on and off). The meaning of this piece was apparently: “*To examine the definition in plain terms.*”

Life-changing. Move over, Rubens.

Regardless, Mr Creed was awarded £40,000 for that act of tasteless pugnacity. Another petulant example is Tracy Emin’s 1999 Turner Prize-shortlisted travesty: *My Bed* — which was literally her unmade bed in a room. So to examine this furtherance of Abstract Expressionism, what does the Conceptualism definition really say? *Universals exist only within the mind and have no external or substantial reality.* Pure relativism. This is saying that nothing is guaranteed to exist outside your own thoughts and is essentially solipsism, the root impetus behind much of our vapid and narcissistic modernity. Solipsism is the philosophical idea that only one’s own mind is sure to exist and everything else is relative and questionable – including the existence of other people. Life is a psychotic game and the individual is God: patently nihilistic. And what does this even have to do with painting or visual art? Is it even acceptable as a true or remotely valid foundation for anything, let alone an exceedingly expensive universal art movement? If you are going to be vainglorious and indulgent, you really should start from somewhere a bit more solid. For this reason alone, our increasingly shambling art culture should be more widely recognized for what it is: a thing of great embarrassment in the historical sense, producing nothing of value.

Irrational movements such as Conceptualism seem harmless but ultimately work to undermine every facet of society with their whimsical speciousness and lazy loathing. It is the perfect crux of our Modernist culture of me, the loathsome, consumerist false individualism. An impoverished pandering to the least talented persists, whereby someone like

Yoko Ono can be considered an art laureate. This Conceptualism is also open for endless reinterpretation in art academies and universities, our socialist bottlenecks for youth demoralization. If you are already managing to exist in a field of total meaninglessness – where the more abstract and unfounded an idea, the more it is lauded – then where lies the talent and sagacity of such a movement for the creative person? What exactly is a young person to do with a degree in Conceptualism? What ultimate good can come of it? They are only fit, if they are lucky, to work spreading the same poisonous message as the teachers themselves.

The message of our entire modern art is that nothing can definitively be said about anything. If I can gingerly put a lump of excrement on a plate and call it art (as has been done) and be hailed as an artist for ‘breaking down boundaries’ or some such thing, then this very act proves that fine art’s relative merit is unquestionable and unchangeable. According to Modernist theory there is absolutely no point in learning the technical skills of fine art. Better to think of some irony you can express in a Conceptualist installation. The reality is that absolutely nobody who is not a pretentious, intellectually mediocre, art institution hack has the slightest moment’s time for Conceptualist installation. It draws much more groans and rolled eyes than it does excitement or praise. Not only does a typical Conceptualist simply have no need for art-related skills, such skills are actually a detriment to them. A rudimentary or ‘primitive’ approach is much more politically correct and will not ruffle any feathers with its uncomfortably occidental attention to detail.

It also goes without saying, as with all Modernism, that the work itself is practically irrelevant. Much more important is the Artspeak that accompanies it, commonly about rebelliously defying or exposing staid cultural norms, or whatever hot topics of the day they care to spin as the work of the evil patriarchal white male and his historic evil society of fabulous art. This diatribe will explain to the credulous how they should feel about the rebelliously feckless installation. The TVs playing static, the random debasing sexual or toilet connotation, the objects that may be part of the work or just have been dropped by a passing gallery viewer. So challenging. The more vague, offensive and seemingly meaningless, the

more it is assumed the artist has diligently and with patient intelligence hidden the message. Distressing examples abound.

To summarize this ultimate futility that is the ethos of Conceptualism and essentially that of Modernism itself: because the world only exists within the artist's mind, the most celebrated examples of modern art apparently exist purely to express that nothing is art, for the reason that nothing much exists outside the mind. Therefore, they are artists simply because they insist. Aesthetics and rationality are vanquished.

The more corporatist-friendly Pop Artists are next on our time line, though they only had a brief heyday before Conceptualism really overtook contemporary art. They were inspired by Abstract Expressionism and consumer design, and were famous for using found objects, similar to the Dadaists.

5) Pop Art (1960s): Art and consumerism.



Campbell's Soup I, Andy Warhol (1968).

Pop Art seems to have been but a brief foray, though admittedly they were more honest about their exploitation than the Abstract Expressionists. Pop art could be said to have been morally worthless and typically delinquent, but at least openly so. It was also, oddly enough, the first recognition of the much-maligned comic book as fine art in any sense – but only in an ironic, gimmicky way, as Modernists can never break the taboo

of admitting frank traditional skill. The king of Pop Art was no doubt Andy Warhol, who can be quoted saying:

“I am a deeply superficial person. Making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art. So the very act of making money, doesn’t matter how, becomes the art.”

Making money is the art. Nothing to do with what he actually creates, just the spectacle of his audaciousness. In some ways, I applaud Warhol for his brazen irreverence as it smacks of an honesty and intelligence not found in Duchamp or Picasso, who raved continually about their own genius. Warhol is glibly famous for having assistants and friends actually paint his paintings. If that does not show his hidden low respect for Modernism, albeit possibly inadvertently, nothing else will.

Again, though opportunistic, his apparent open jabs at the absurdity of the art world and his wanton exploitation of the art opinions of his day seem forgivable. Sadly, his legacy was not to be exploding the paradigm but fuelling its irrational vigor. Warhol existed to mock the establishment, was openly concerned only with making money and had done away with any pretence of being a true artist or creating meaningful work – if ever there were any such intentions to begin with. But his mockery of the art establishment is something I can sympathize with and his irreverence has a certain charm, despite his contribution to art’s degradation. The rest of Pop Art is a largely monotonous gimmick of enlarged comic book panels and cardboard cut-outs poking fun at the nuclear family — low-level agitprop.

End of art timeline.

So we have laid bare the various schemes and patterns woven into this enormous tapestry of lies. I believe my argument is more than sound, that Modernists have dishonestly labelled many art movements as Modernist that have nothing to do with the ‘Modernist approach’. Romanticism (Turner), Art Nouveau (Klimt) and the Pre-Raphaelites (Millais) are by no means a major departure from previous movements philosophically and are certainly not abstract. These movements have been posthumously labeled as Modernist so that Modernists can claim some nice pictures by assumed confederacy – after the actual artists are long dead and cannot complain of course. It is quite clear, and not at all difficult to discern visually, works that

have followed the rules of æsthetics and those that have a basis in anti-æsthetics.

So to summarize, abstraction began with Expressionism and gradually spread to prominence not through popularity but more a self-professed fake elitism supported by media and powerful people of the left — marching gradually through the academies, spreading like disease. Industrialized mass production made our daily objects bland ghosts of what they are meant to be and the avant-garde caught us off guard with educational institution trends. The linkages on the timeline I have presented are clear: Expressionism, Dadaism, Cubism, Abstract Expressionism. It is all the same thing, Modernism, a visual art philosophy whose goal is to destroy European culture itself by redefining art as something nonsensical. My personal redefining of Modernism is not an egotistical whimsy. We are dealing with completely different attitudes to art that are incompatible and at war with each other. Postmodernism is not worth mentioning, it is a pretense at being different from Modernism but really once you are in the realm of pure and pointless abstraction as a rule, it is all the same game. People who claim they like both traditional art and Abstract Expressionism are not in full awareness of this. Playing the game of *just liking everything* to get along is siding with the Modernists, as you have to abandon all concept of standards to meet at their level.

The Turner Prize: Conceptualist asylum

The Conceptualism movement really epitomizes the extremes Modernists are willing to go to in perpetuating their swindle at the expense of our budding artists and our children's future. But even finding new shocking debasements can become passé. The jewel in the Conceptualist crown today is the aforementioned Turner Prize in the United Kingdom. It is an annual art contest presented by the Tate Gallery, which started in 1984 and has become the nation's most publicized art award. The contest is open to all art forms but accepted pieces are generally works of Conceptualism, it being the go-to art movement for exceptionally pretentious materialist elites. As expected, those works involve a lot of crude nudity, arranged mannequins and random toilets.

“Historically art has been both traditional and experimental, the experiments creating new traditions. At times there have been ruptures in tradition, and we experience that today, when Conceptual Art seems to have no connection with what went before – or at any rate since the rupture was initiated a century ago. It is exemplified by what can be seen at Tate Modern and in particular its recently opened extension. In the latest issue of The Jackdaw (copies of which are here for you take), a magazine whose editor, David Lee, is devoted to encouraging traditional art and satirising the new (or in reality the not-so-new), I have suggested a comparison of this with the rare shows of two centuries ago – The Vanishing Woman, the Panopticons and other then modern inventions, and so on. These were described in The Shows of London by Richard Altick. Then, however, fine art exhibitions, at the Royal Academy and elsewhere, were shown separately and as a higher genre. What seems objectionable to me is that the two are now mixed up, when what goes on at Tate Modern has often more in common with acts at Covent Garden than with art as we knew it. Salvador Dali admitted this when he called his museum at Figueres not a

museum or art gallery, but a Theatre-Museum. I have suggested that Tate Modern or at any rate its extension should be reclassified not as an art gallery but as popular theatre.”

– *The Neglected Importance of J.M.W. Turner’s Bequest for British Culture* By Selby Whittingham

To quote more examples of Turner prize favourites:

“The Chapman Brothers (Jake and Dinos Chapman) were given what was generally felt to be a long-overdue nomination, and caused press attention for a sculpture, Death, that appeared to be two cheap plastic blow-up sex dolls with a dildo.”

That sounds *really* intellectual and meritable. The Turner Prize got its name from the great nineteenth century landscape painter J.M.W. Turner, lending credence to their anti-æsthetic abstractions by stealing his name after his death in the assumption he would be in full support of their radical anti-art. This kind of absorbing or stealing of an actual laudable namesake to ridicule and debase tradition is a fairly standard tactic of progressive zealotry. Turner himself was classically trained, had nothing to do with Conceptualism as it obviously did not exist (and never should have) and was possibly the greatest landscape painter of all time. But of course, respect and reality have never troubled an ardent Modernist. Were Turner around today he would no doubt be filled with abject horror to hear his name used in association with anything even resembling Conceptualism, the very existence of which is predicated on destroying the tradition he exalted.

This irony is apparently lost on the Turner prize Conceptualist fanatics, who are best described as a pretentious, uncreative gang of failed, quasi-celebrity degenerates howling and dancing like witches about a bonfire of solipsism. Needless to say, such insanity did not exist in Turner’s time. Among painters of his age, Turner was the most wildly original and famed virtuoso, legendary in his portrayal of nature and technique of painting atmosphere. His craftsmanship was individualistic and styled to the point of a quasi-abstraction (hence their attempts to claim him), but executed with maturity (intensity of style with masterful execution). His work demonstrates painstaking devotion to classical tradition, to the illusion of

painting. The use of his name for this modern conceptualist prize should not be permitted but since anything related to art in our woeful era immediately falls into a black hole of nonsense, nobody makes the effort to complain. Using the name of an actual genius after his death to promote something he would undoubtedly not agree with is a perfect example of the audacious fraudulence of our anarchic contemporary artists. As though the ghost of the long-dead master painter Turner presides in spirit over their hysteric proceedings, surveying with brimming pride their motley collection of dung paintings, rubbish bags and TVs playing static. No, it is with the deepest, twisted naïvety, utterly lost on their incompetent adherents, that the Conceptualists have stolen the family name of the most recognized historic master painter in the Romantic tradition. Indeed, this simple act of association accounts for much of their supposed success. Like the countless other leftist appropriation examples, the modern convention is that Turner, who painstakingly created unique and objectively breathtaking masterpieces, and Damien Hirst, who presents found objects in formaldehyde, are of equal merit. They are part of the same tradition because, as we are told, all previous art was merely a lead-up to the pinnacle that is Conceptualism. But in fact it was a malevolent, orchestrated coup.

“Every drop in the ocean counts. But only art and music have the power to bring peace. I thought art was a verb, rather than a noun.”

– Yoko Ono

Just listen to those tired, hippy platitudes. The Conceptualist garners his false respect for having broken down the boundaries initially imposed by those, like Turner, who believed the vocation of painting involved learning how to make beautiful paintings (which, to a Modernist, is considered limiting). If Turner were alive today, any work he might submit to his namesake prize would not make it through the preliminary acceptance round. He would be laughed out of a contest bearing his name, precisely for the absurd reason that his work exhibits advanced skill in painting.

Why, then, do they want to use his name in their contest? That would be because nobody knows or cares about the names of any Conceptualist who ever existed.

Not even Conceptualists.

Their names and their works carry no tangible weight and at some level the cult's adherents know it is all a scam. They are just kind of sharing an ongoing joke, a morbid prank that never ends – or a social habit, because they do not have the capacity for self-reflection. Has anyone, anywhere, who is not a BBC journalist pretending to be art-savvy, ever expressed a genuine positive opinion of Tracey Emin?

There is no lineage of influence in Conceptualism — not in the same way Turner, for instance, was influenced by the great landscape painter Claude. The most you could say in terms of movement linkage is that Conceptualism is Abstract Expressionist performance art, basically coming off the canvas to broaden the possibilities of debasement. The Conceptualist Hirst is now the most successful artist (monetarily) of all time. Yet he is absolutely not an artist at all and does nothing. He has not ranked in or even met the basic criteria of artistry to become most materially successful artist in history.

To quote Turner himself: *“I know of no genius but the genius of hard work.”*

Hard work indeed – Turner spent arduous long years mastering his craft, not putting found objects in a gallery with smug audacity. Turner would not have had a moment's time for Damien Hirst and his sharks after working so ceaselessly to bequeath his commission to his people. His is an art that is impossible not to value.

There have thankfully been some dissenting voices and this ludicrous Turner Prize has become an occasionally mocked and polarizing topic. I think it is fair to say that the vast and sensible majority of the populace does indeed laugh derisively at their behaviour and watch their chaos for spectacle. And of course, all such common-sense dissent should be encouraged.

Abstract Expressionism and Conceptualism are so ridiculous that they actually become difficult to dissect, for when your very core is empty air it is easy to be evasive. In that sense, they are aided by their dullard's

confidence. In Conceptualism, the very act of criticizing or expressing disgust at their work can become part of the art piece itself. This is something I witnessed many times, most recently on a documentary where Modernist works were derided and trashed as a kind of ironic performance, shouting 'I hate this' and throwing the art in the bin for the camera as a kind of reverse psychology counteraction. Who can keep track of all this chaos? Who is actually determining that this is important or intellectual? Yet every time you think they have no further bottom to break through, that they will finally get bored of their pretentiousness, they manage a new low. The painting monkey would have been an assumed bottom tier but that was 40 years ago now. One might speculate that they are all earning too much money to care. They invented a bubble world for themselves that is possibly nothing more than a vast money-laundering scheme of bombastically priced garbage, at the expense of the entirety of art.



J.M.W. Turner, Ulysses deriding Polyphemus, 1829 & Dido Building Carthage, 1815. The Conceptualist 'Turner Prize' is named after this great artist, under the assumption he would be delighted with that. Moving classical themes, reverence for nature and holy light, inspiring and confident. The exact opposite of the art found in the 'Turner Prize'.

Since Modernist concepts of art are taught now in schools at all levels, with little or no resistance, the buyers cannot be expected to know anything about art, or fight with their wallets against this apparently unstoppable tide of anti-art. As with the now infamous example of the top Picasso collector turning out to be blind since birth, all signs indicate the Turner Prize and indeed the Tate itself are just another racket for the wealthy, completely removed from the sacred duty of supporting the arts. It is fair to say then

that if the art collectors can be blind, then the visual art is tangibly worthless outside of a kind of auctioneers' token. You are buying a signature, it has no merit beyond that. Some of the buyers and sellers are laundering money on items whose value can be determined, on paper, to be as high as you want because all objective measure of standard is removed by our goofy new definition of art. Because we have taught ourselves and our children the Greenbergian maxim that the absence of standard is art. The visceral impact of traditional and classical art stands on its own merit and requires no narrative. But Conceptualism and the Turner Prize prove that in today's world, the artwork itself is utterly irrelevant. They have successfully demonstrated that to be an artist is to get away with doing things that demonstrate a dislike for art.

Our ancestors did not have Conceptualism or Abstract Expressionism because they had a healthy culture that worshipped order — and from order sprang high culture.

Turner Prize winners like Grayson Perry, who goes around dressed as a clownish transvestite, win because he is willing to mock his manhood and culture to the utmost extreme. He is rewarded for being a kind of ultimate clown. Conceptualists like Perry are daring us with their effrontery to merely say aloud the truth: that they are pretentious and demeaning, that a brain-damaged person could have created their work and nobody would know the difference. They exist upon a solipsistic hamster wheel of daring us to point this out so they can accuse us of being authoritarian. Lucky for them, the day is arrived when we shall have to take them up on that dare.

Conceptualists and the Turner Prize are more often mocked than celebrated even in mainstream media, which is normally compliant with Modernism and leftist attitudes in general. I suppose they are just too appallingly absurd to be taken seriously by anybody who is not cripplingly pretentious or part of the establishment. Popular mocking, however, has not been enough to stop their tasteless shenanigans or slow down their escalating and depraved circus of lunacy. It is hard to pinpoint where the ride will stop in terms of continually outdoing the latest shocking art world debasement. How can you out-stupid Conceptualism? Possibly only when their original culture, the negation of which feeds their parasitic frenzy, is

forever extinguished — and we have lit a miles-high bonfire of every good and inspiring piece of art that existed before Modernism.

Before we move on to a description of other cultural trends that feed into Modernism and the solutions found in traditionalism, we must describe the cyclopean parody that is our most tragic casualty: architecture.

The Importance of Architecture

“Therefore since nature has proportioned the human body so that its members are duly proportioned to the frame as a whole, in perfect buildings the different members must be in exact symmetrical relations to the whole general scheme.”

- Vitruvius

Perhaps the most unfortunate and heart-wrenching victim of Modernism has been architecture. This is primarily because, unlike avant-garde music or Abstract Expressionist painting, it cannot be avoided or unseen. It is everywhere.

Nothing in contemporary architecture follows form and nobody pays attention to harmony. Indeed, I believe they have forgotten how. It may be said that even ideas are unsafe. And so it would seem our art traditions are never to return, as we shade ourselves beneath a panoply of monstrous abstract shapes. Our creativity is rendered sterile as we gaze upon the hideous, brightly painted melange of metal beams in the courtyard of the horrifically monolithic plate glass office building where we congregate on corporate lunch breaks, snuggled beneath the wings of these demonic

avatars to ugliness and absurdity. We are gelded, unhappy, achieving nothing nourishing. Slaves.

What would the mighty Vitruvius think of what we have done to our cities? He would decry us as the most decadent and deformed society that has ever existed. Objectively or subjectively, even the Modernist architects themselves cannot deny that being misshapen and grotesque is the rule of thumb, spoken of plainly (though in Artspeak) in their manifestos. Ugliness is their stated aim. Beauty values are supremacy and therefore racist.

Why are Paris, Rome and Florence still hotbeds of world tourist activity? It is not because of their scant few Modernist galleries and buildings, as nobody travels to see those. Modern art exists to allow the anti-intellectual modern man to vent empty egalitarian shibboleths. Like a drunkard, we are blind to having lost our idealism in this apathy, while we teeter on the brink of a bored oblivion.



Giovanni Paolo Panini - Interior of the Pantheon, Rome - 1734.

“The plague of modern architecture, a plague which sits like a plastic embodiment of cancer over our suburbs, office buildings, schools, prisons, factories, churches, hotels, motels and airline terminals. A totalitarianism that has slipped into America with no specific political face that proliferates in that new architecture which rests like an incubus upon the American landscape. All our buildings have come to look like one another and to cease to function with the art, beauty, and sometimes mysterious proportions of the past. Gothic knots and Romanesque oppressions which entered his psyche through the schoolhouses of youth have now been excised. This new architecture destroys the past. Leaving us isolated in the empty landscapes of psychosis, precisely that inner landscape of void and dread which we flee by turning to totalitarian styles of life.”

“He compared them as the architecture of genius and the architecture of bureaucracy. It is the lack of ornamentation, complexity, and mystery in modern buildings that I choose to call totalitarian.. It should be obvious. In 30 years an æsthetic movement can shift from a force which opens possibilities to one which closes them. Once totalitarianism is seen as a social process which deadens human possibilities ...it is not too great a jump to declare that the Guggenheim museum may be a totalitarian work of art...that museum shatters the mood of the neighborhood. More completely, wantonly, barbarously than the Pan Am building kills the sense of vista on park avenue.

“It is too cheap to separate mafia (commercial) architects with their Mussolini modern...from serious modern architects. No, I think Le Corbusier and Wright, and all the particular giants of the Bauhaus are the true villains; the mafia architects are their proper sons; modern architecture at its best is even more anomalous than at its worst, for it tends to excite the Faustian and empty appetites of the architects ego rather than reveal an artist’s vision of our collective desire for shelter which is pleasurable, substantial, intricate, intimate, delicate, detailed, foibled, rich in gargoyle, guignol, false closet, secret stair, witch’s hearth, attic, grandeur, kitsch, a world of buildings as diverse as the need within the eye for stimulus and variation. For beware: the ultimate promise of modern architecture is collective sightlessness for the species. Blindness is the fruit of your design.”

– Norman Mailer

Architecture is perhaps the most compulsory consequence of our Modernist creative misdirection. We live within and around architecture. It is the waking manifestation of our ideals, the foundation and limit of our living spaces. You can easily ignore or avoid a Cubist painting exhibit as a bad taste choice but you cannot so easily avoid your entire street or city. All such Modernist cityscapes, without exception, are vapid, lacklustre and grotesque. They are the embodiment of the insanely backwards philosophy that architecture must be anti-tradition to be new; that it must be smugly kinky and remind us constantly that we have rejected our roots for an unseen equality utopia. It must go against the natural, instinctual and the beautiful. Modernist architecture is also truly globalist as it is all the same,

all over the world: riveted glass boxes, obtuse shapes, clinical straight lines. These hapless architects all believe they are being new and groundbreaking but this ‘style’ has been unchanged since the middle of the last century.

A summation of this style can be seen in endless, sentimentally Soviet tenement flats, or the Gehryesque disproportional mutations of the vanguard. Both factions can be said to be quite similar, the fancier one will just have a more expensive challenging (Artspeak) feature, such as an off-putting or intentionally chaotic layout. Generally speaking, if it is just a box it is Corbusierian cookie cutter Modernism for the lower class; if it is titanically hideous and undulating, it is elitist Modernism. In both cases, it will feel inhuman. To be seen to be gimmicky and anti-traditional is the essential part to both avenues. We have grown accustomed to the tedious pall of endless plate glass and with it the annihilation of quaint local style, sacrificed for the false mercantile values of globalism — generic, sanitized, soul-crushing.

At the higher tier, beauty is mocked most frantically as fantastic sums are thrown at bloated architectural carbuncles designed as lasting testimony to our pathetic slow suicide. Religion, race, culture and nature have lost significance, as we only wish to see whitewashed commercial temples to our internalized self-loathing. They are castrated consumerist safe-zones where we helplessly venerate a nihilistic materialism like junkies. There is a reason why cathedrals to materialism did not exist in the past. Who is willing to fight and die for their local shopping mall? Idiotic is not sufficiently derogatory to describe these erected follies, which are more like Orwellian monuments to human misery, an affirmation of the cult of the ‘individual’, which has no personality and is outside history. While the mighty Egyptians constructed eternal monuments to their afterlife beliefs, we now construct only the most banal designs to convince ourselves that art and history are meaningless. We wish to express our personal right to like the unlikable – but without irony. Even classical materialism could not sustain such a bleak outlook.

We must repeat that the only unbreakable rule in this game is that the edifice must not appear to be beautiful, proportional or hold any of the

values European architecture is based on. If it is remotely self-affirming it will incite accusations of fascism or comparison with colonialism. By this cowardly reasoning, the laws of Vitruvius are not just discarded but are anathema. Any semblance of traditionalism, or even so much as pleasing decoration, is derided in the harshest possible terms. It is 'pastiche', it is not 'something new' (by some bizarre, undying definition of newness). As with Modernist painting, plain beauty is regarded as anti-intellectual, because it does not entail the discovery of a self-deprecating story. The pervasive thought crime of desiring refinement is suppressed beneath an insurmountable skyline of horrific industrial superstructure.

There is specifically a tenet of the cult within mainstream architecture that abhors decoration of any sort, seeing it as either decadent or unnecessary. The forerunner to this trend began arguably with *Adolf Loos* and his essay *Ornament and Crime*, published in Vienna in 1910. While he was railing against the intricate and floral (I believe 'cupids' are mentioned quite often), it is ironic to examine Loos' own works, like the Looshaus in Michaelerplatz, Vienna, which while quite stoic in comparison with the Baroque is by today's standards positively brimming with neoclassical decoration and design flourishes. He would no doubt view our architectural activity of the past 60 years with great sadness and be ashamed by trends he might be said to have inspired. Loos was further expounded upon by the likes of Frank Lloyd Wright, a competent but opportunist architect whose reverence of simplicity further opened the floodgates to that which followed.

Wright is quoted as saying: "The mother art is architecture. Without an architecture of our own we have no soul of our own civilization." Perhaps there is truth in that. The spaces we occupy shape the spaces within, and vice versa.

Our contemporary architects profess to love the bland angles of these plate glass monoliths and flat concrete walkways devoid of interest or charm. But worse are those whose untalented egos force bizarre and obtrusively coloured, bulging aberrations into architectural design. Some, no doubt, enthusiastically believe in Modernism out of some mental weakness or conformism; others are more culpably aware of both their own

shortcomings and the devastation their exploitation leads to. Many are merely taking advantage of a populist and wealthy occupational trend, others confusedly meander out of architecture education brainwashed and offered no option but to aid in their culture's ruination. The corrosive decline of Western values permeates the very functionality and sacred symbolism of our daily lives. The grand and doomed experiment of the cult of the individual rules tyrannically over now-outlawed Renaissance values and is no more naked before the eyes of the world as in our dwellings and high rises.

Among modern critics, art students, professionals and architects, every excuse is made to hardwire the view that classical values in architecture are somehow racist or undesirable. It was all very nice but supremacist and anyway, we now have the shiny new end road of Modernism: plain box dwellings with straight-angle concrete. The conquering manifestation of the rise of Evola's lowest caste, the values of the valueless — art made by the artless to combat inequality. It is not just the death of romance but of the possibility of humanity as a worthy custodian of the planet.

The chic futurism of the Sixties, perhaps the dying gasp of Art Deco/Art Nouveau, now considered retro-chic (generally falling under the interests of whimsical romantic fetishists along with gothic revival, neoclassical, etc), did have a recognizable beauty aesthetic and a catchy self belief. A sort of spacefaring future lounge style that, while inferior to its predecessors, retained a certain accomplished harmony. Basically it still had a desire to be visually pleasing. And that brief oeuvre was the very last recognizable European style not wholly based on Modernist abstraction or utilitarianism. There have been some more recent attempts at an organic or green style of architecture, which can be stylish or pleasing in a natural way. But sadly they are also too often weakened by reliance on tired Modernist tropes: blundering shapes and flat surfaces which 'draw attention' to the materials. A truer root style that is respecting of tradition and new could be achieved by discarding gimmick for sacred geometry, using all-natural materials as a matter of course and not starkly to 'draw attention to their texture' on a flat plane, while most importantly drawing ideas from observing the designs and patterns of nature in depth. Keep your creation pure: stone, wood, clay, lime mortars, metal, etc.

I have seen a very few examples of potential new art styles that showed promise but stalled and withered in the Modernist atmosphere. An example was the blossoming organic and quite original interior/exterior home designs by the painter Roger Dean. His little-known foray into architecture, particularly regarding interiors, has always struck me as a unique effort that is Art Nouveau-ish and unique but sidesteps the jarring disharmony of Modernism altogether. No small feat. There are similar examples of discarded ideas that could blossom into whole new art avenues for exploration that are æsthetic and optimistic. Sadly, they have not been supported and encouraged, as we have been too busy managing our decline.

Nothing halts the destruction of beauty on the march to the bottom. We can look forward to more structures of the finest glass boxes, where the starkest concrete must be at odd angles with flourishes of garish, state-protected ‘graffiti art’ – or even on occasion some Mondrian-inspired stacked blocks, which never quite ebb in popularity as the child-like Modernist mind delights in their primary colours. But rest assured, if some new avenue of architectural disfigurement can be achieved, we shall see it.

It is a perfect economizing of materials, principles and design that have narrowed our architecture into this squalid, urban horror. What is worse, a large swath of our populace are trained from birth to accept these juvenile and backward principles, and tout the miracles of modernist architecture. They think they live in some bright future-world worthy of past envy, only without the optimistic space travel. Their minds and lives are adapting to the architecture instead of vice versa and they are becoming smaller.

We could not now easily erase the indelible mark of this terrible architecture as it involves the utter abandonment of large tracts of our major cities. Not to say I do not secretly believe, beyond hope, that a great razing will eventually be at hand. Does that sound harsh? But what other result could we possibly hope for? We have been erecting structures for 50 years that have no value. We must correct the mistake or become that planetary parasite we have feared of ourselves in our darkest hours.

II. The rise of materialism and the loss of idealism

The average person has
lost touch with art

So what do most people really think of contemporary art? How many of them give art any thought at all? Do they feel there is a rational merit to the splatters of an Abstract Expressionist? Do they assume that scholars have calculated its merit and it is not their place to doubt? If it could be demonstrated that there is no merit to this art, that it is smoke and mirrors with a hefty price tag, you would expect public attitude to change. There can be no objective quality to anything if you throw out the book of standards. Conceptualist performance noise art is a hard sell, even with expensive Artspeak. The average guy wrote off modern art the first moment

he laid eyes on it and to avoid starting unnecessary conflicts, he was happy enough to say ‘I don’t get it’ in the hope that it would not impact his life. ‘Just get me out of here’ is what he’s thinking. ‘Make art leave me alone.’

Videos of Pollock working exhibit the unbridled genius of his patented ‘splatter-lunge’. What exactly is the rational reason that this random paint spilling should be considered masterful? He does not appear to ever stop and ‘correct’ a perhaps wrongly flung splatter. The average person is still not so stupid as to fail to spot a boondoggle. It takes a concertedly flaky hipster to really get into this garbage and try to peddle it as intellectual. Pollock rocketed to fame after a spread on his work appeared in *Life* magazine in 1949, proving again the power of the media over the mass-mind. Deceitful language-magician Clement Greenberg wrote of Pollock:

“I took one look at it and I thought, ‘Now that’s great art,’ and I knew Jackson was the greatest painter this country had produced.” And can any one rationally explain how or why this would?

Why the average gallery visitor quietly tolerates the appalling baseness of your typical contemporary exhibit is a bit of a mystery. Dildos and defecation have been an art mainstay for many decades. The truth is a very large number of people have their opinion formed by authority figures and social cues, and the general incomprehensibility of modern art aids in keeping them quiet about its obvious hopelessness, because asking questions results in incomprehensible tirades of Artspeak. Moreover, a great number of people find the idea of thinking or doing something socially abnormal unthinkable. This fact is an important piece in the jigsaw: what is perceived to be (even guessed to be) the popular opinion becomes the popular opinion. The great majority will suppress anecdotal experience, self-analysis or even historic fact and objective knowledge if it conflicts with majority opinion, or might make things in any way socially uncomfortable. I am not sure this is something that was traditionally true of Europeans, though there has always been a strong sense of civic duty, but it is certainly and sadly true of the scolding, surveillance-heavy nanny-state of today. There are obviously many sound evolutionary reasons for social behaviours, yet social conformism, even apparently to the level of near

suicide, remains one of those depressing human facts that certainly leaves any group open to communal manipulation.

The various elites that pull these societal strings know well how to control this mob mind. Things like TV and corporate news media are priceless resources for the wealthy propagandist in the globalist age. You simply tell people something is genius or great on the TV and they believe it. You tell them what to like, what they want to buy, what to think about public figures — sometimes outright, sometimes subliminally. More recently, the internet has been a great foible for this thought control but they are now trying hard to control that too.

Newer generations hardly know what to make of art at all. Modernism has been with us so long but still remains so patently false that subjecting people to it is now a strange litmus test for judging how easily you will accept what you are told. Will you join the sleepwalkers? And because art is now divorced from reality, the average person has no concept of its former meaning – or an understanding that it was once inextricably interwoven into all aspects of daily life. The majority of our lost people wander in total confusion through these galleries and either draw the effort to pretend they are being enlightened, or find ways to laugh at it, or write off art as a foreign country. Many striving but browbeaten artists themselves also decide to ‘join the game’ and pretend they can extract meaning from the abstract habit. If one decides to swallow that pill, I imagine there are ways to get into the abstract-narrative mindset, and perhaps extract some fleeting feeling of false accomplishment as an artist. But like a rat that figures out a maze built for him, any accomplishments along Modernist frameworks remain merely parlour games on a doomed vessel or make-up on a pig – an illusion of accomplishment within a mental maze that goes nowhere of tangible value and is ironically antithetical to art.

But then there is always that impediment or hindrance to total Modernist chaos, in the battle for the minds of individuals. The old works, the real art, still on display – often in beautiful traditional buildings. You can likely not make sane Europeans hate the Venus de Milo for political reasons as it is a self-fulfilling testament to truth by its existence. And tis is

despite the harder-left fantasies about joining Islamic State in smashing ‘racist’ sculpture museums with jackhammers.

Sadly, for most people today, we have reached a state of relativism where objective beauty does not exist, nor is it possible. Nor would people dare to guess that discrimination (as in discriminating between real art and pretentious sophistry) is a necessity of life, in both the material world and the world of ideas — that while now branded an evil, judgementalism is in fact necessary and good, leading to refined tastes and ascending high culture. And to use even more taboo terms, despite all we have been taught, discrimination is morally right – if only because it is an unavoidable aspect of reality and human nature. We discriminate every moment of the day, when we make any decision about anything. It is essential to survival and as unavoidable as breathing.

But why does a discussion of art require such a vast tableau of issues, enemies and insights? Why must I deconstruct reality and self and culture and say mean-sounding things to describe what has happened?

Because you must reach for and be willing to hit that rock-bottom reality, across all possible arguments, in order to defeat the unnatural relativist suppositions that prop up abstractionism. You need to know where you yourself stand mentally, from the first and inevitable moment that a Modernist claims you are an authoritarian extremist for not believing that everything is art.

Because we are so submerged in a tunnel of abstract and obscure values, the best we can do is obey the instinctive impulse and simply avoid contemporary art as much as possible. This idea seems agreeable, until of course we realize there is no escaping it whatsoever, for as soon as we step out of the gallery and into the street we are confronted by the appalling pointlessness of modern architecture and living spaces. While shopping, we hear the most empty, heartless music ever imagined. We read books to our children that are illustrated by people without a scrap of talent or rendered lifelessly on computers. TV and movies all degenerate further and further under generally accepted misconceptions about what is good or what is healthy, or what is inspiring. The movable bar of morality dictated by the

politically correct media barons shifts at will and the credulous follow without regard to goodness or a future.

Like arguing with a child, the sheer level of oration and argument required to raise these naive people to even a basic level of reality proves an impossible feat of stamina. When one is dealing with indoctrinated sophists, solipsists or liars, only a drastic and time consuming battle of rhetoric will break through their thought process, and not likely even then, considering the various personality disorders that limit self-reflection. So, ridiculously, their egalitarian bombast proves too much effort to engage and the sane man finds no chink in the armour of the fool. Some of the more ardent fools even find it a convincing point, that our disgust at a splatter painting proves the artist has the power to subliminally tweak us emotionally. The idea being that this was his intent, and thus somehow 'art' has been performed. This only demonstrates how nebulous and childish the concept of 'art' has become. It is accepted as a gimmick that 'makes you think', or 'asks questions' (while never answering them), with any reaction including dislike vindicating it. What sort of shabby carnival trick is that? What crooked mental gymnastics better prove that we are literally dealing with half-wits?

Like a myopic pit, this game sucks in all light of reason and throws permanent disorder back in your face. Those without the acumen or effort to combat this Modernist psyche merely move along with a lingering distrust. But apathy and disinterest only fuels them more!

Found objects can now be expensive art pieces, you just say: "This is art." The work has thus successfully defied talent, hard work and explanation. No matter what we say or how we respond, it is called a success by the establishment that supports it. The core purpose of nearly every Western institution has been inverted in this way and the real purpose of even having art institutions to begin with (which is the preservation and continuation of art and culture) has been lost. It has become foggy and difficult to recognize and appreciate achievement in an ocean of exploitation, immodesty and chicanery. And so a man who has the pretentious pomposity to put his own defecation in a can (1961's *Merda d'artista* by *Piero Manzoni*) can then sell it at Sotheby's for £97,250. And

nobody bats an eyelid. 'Art' has apparently transpired and art fans who are unable to put into words their feeling of distrust become the plaything of these liars. Art then either consciously or subconsciously becomes associated with lies and something impossible to trust and mostly impossible to like. Worse are the mediocre sentimentalists who react with childish rage at any suggestion that art should follow standards and not be whatever any individual claims it to be, the simpering cowards who are so vocal but utterly incapable of action against opposition.

There are many people who hope against hope that a hidden but extremely qualified person actually has a masterful, honest reason for calling splatter paintings art, and the hefty price tag has been applied to safeguard this fact — that despite all appearances, we are in safe hands somehow. Sadly, this is not the case.

There is a tremendous fear of accusations of narrowness of thought, that to criticize the conceptually abstract is a kind of evil notion, an act of personal totalitarianism. However, the critical exclusion of the classical is not held in the same regard. Ultimately, the average person is swayed by perceived authority. Major media outlets control public opinion, largely by presenting themselves as representing public opinion, which instead they are shaping. The average person may grumble about the state of art, architecture, education, etc, but unless they are placed into physical discomfort they are evidently prepared to take quite a lot of punishment before risking any loss in social market value.

When enough of us tire of the ugly monuments and ruinous reinventions, and the Modernists are finally no longer tolerated, there must be no allowance for their possible return. Their disastrous social experiment has been played out and we now live with the destructive fruit they bear. Indeed, we will be very lucky to ever escape this windfall, as the outlook at the time of writing this remains quite bleak. Rushing to refresh and swell their ranks daily are never-ending waves of newly brainwashed college students, a regenerative army of soft-faced acolytes. Our hard evidence for Modernism being false lies in the fact that it did not exist for most of history, therefore we might presume it is a kind of imposed, unnatural ideology, to which the solution would be to simply stop supporting a bad idea and not entertaining it as a relativist pastime. Despite how it looks on

the surface, Modernism is not harmless. It is either a symptom of the death stage of civilization, or (I think more likely) it is the cause of that death.

One thing remains certain: contemporary relativist morality ensures that healthy ideas are suppressed, and the downward curve of quantity over quality ensures an endless series of collapsing artistic expectations.

The lies of relativism: buzzwords as enclosed tautology

“Thoughtcrime does not entail death. Thoughtcrime is death.” – 1984, George Orwell

I would guess at this stage that Modernists cringe at the very word ‘European’ for its nasty overtones of distinctiveness.

Of course, we are all now deemed guilty of the crimes of racism and sexism, the ultimate liberal power words. This is despite, as I intend to point out, these words actually being nonsensical and applied as an irrational accusation to literally anything (and have been). Racism and sexism have been the two most effectively used and all-encompassing leftist attack words to shame and discredit any ideas that are not strictly equality-based. Proud or confident traditional architecture can now be labelled racist, as it exhibits ‘inequality’ or revels in imperialism, colonialism, or whatever. It represents a time in which a homogeneous people unabashedly exerted strength and confidence in what used to be called, quite innocently, a nation. This casually applied label of ‘racism’ instantly moots a building’s entire existence – and just about everything is de facto sexist, as men have built pretty much everything.

Firstly, apart from the lunacy of applying these manufactured outrage terms to art, sexism and racism are words for innate instincts that are not logically possible to extinguish in any context. If you belong to a race or a sex, you have no choice but to defend yourself from that corner or vantage, as a matter of basic survival. Therefore, we are all racist and sexist as needed, to varying degrees, and any considerate need to avoid offending other groups without cause has generally been covered by the basic rules of

politeness in society. Arguments, wars, disagreements and competition can occur whenever there is difference, or individuals. There have been battles over racism because there are races. But it is the nature of difference, of being anything – that there is always an other. If there is more than one person in the room, there is a contest of power. That is simply life. Different races will always, at times, find themselves at odds or in competition, as do the sexes more commonly. It is a matter of basic reality which cannot be avoided, as we all have personal aspects of our existence we must protect as surely as we have a will to live. The racist/sexist accusation takes advantage of our desire to be kind but the fact that effectively only white people can really be accused of racism, and only men of sexism, tells you all you need to know about these words. Like Artspeak, it is all verbal trickery. Why does nobody ever question the fact that the great minds of history never cross-examined themselves by these standards?

What our ancestors understood, and what we have lost, is the importance of truth and the sacrifice involved in the pursuit of it. Understanding what is good or what is bad, through careful study and self-reflection, is not the primary concern of a Modernist who views the natural order as something to be reshaped in favour of a trite, fairytale philosophy. He fails to understand that nothing good will come of denying nature, and his mawkish fears prevent him from seeing truth.

"False words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil."

– Socrates, Phaedo

All this destruction by these accusing buzzwords is doubly tragic for having in their sights Western European art, which is objectively a vast treasure to be cherished by Westerner and non-Westerner alike. There will always be differences and cross-purposes with other major cultures (perpetually, by nature, set in a circumstance of competition) as life is a state of struggle. However, the greater bulk of humanity has benefitted from our art and traditions, in a profound way that cannot be said equally in the reverse. Contrary to this, the liberals are rewriting history to portray Europeans as the perpetual villain. Discrimination, again, is simply an inescapable element of the human condition, required in order to survive and practised every minute of the day. Having good taste itself, or a high

art, is a principled act of discrimination. This state of affairs cannot be altered and as an immovable fact of life, discrimination should not be considered an evil to be excised. It is a necessity, as natural as choice, and if you seek accusing meaning in it then everyone and everything is trapped in a potential web of guilt — doubly so (and hypocritically) when members of a specific group are working against their own kind, such as anti-white Europeans who profess a desire for us to die out, or the disingenuous, low-testosterone male feminists who actually think they are impressing girls by acting like women themselves. Generally, their insincerity stands before them and they are a kind of inescapable pariah even to their own supposed allies.

Modern Westerners desperately feel the need to be self-depreciating, as we are intellectually paralyzed by this false guilt. While this implied guilt is not the tool by which art was dismantled initially, it is the process by which a return to art is suppressed. By shaming and distancing ourselves from traditional art, we believe we are paving the way for a fairer future, one without war, borders or aspirations to domination. We are led to believe in a utopia of multicultural fairness that lies just around the next corner, if we can just destroy these artistic tokens of privilege. To achieve equality, everyone must be exactly the same. Yet this sameness that is not only impossible but indistinguishable from a forced mediocrity. Even worse than mediocrity, it is a malevolent nihilism. Who even wants that phantom total equality? What is the point?

The makers of high art, and therefore of culture, must be exiled for being superior.

“Nature is red in tooth and claw,” as Tennyson put it.

Equality has never been possible. All attempts to make equality a social reality have led to cultural dissipation followed by mass murder, with those holding the guns becoming the new elites. Equality is a child’s fantasy. The illusion is a permanent fleeing from cruelty, even cruel thoughts, and this flight has been the gelding of the West. All unrest is sold to us as ‘justice’.

The Modernism debacle was defended and spread upon the pretence of equality of ideas in art and philosophy. The Greenbergian concept of art

without standards can only spread in the false sentimentalism of a culture seeking equality.

Conversely, the ability to stand fast in the face of cruelty, or to commit necessary cruelty, are necessities of life. There is ultimately no fleeing from certain responsibilities. Modernity and luxury have divorced us from this experience. We have lived for some time now in a world where our food is presented to us sans process, packaged neatly on a shelf like it popped out of the æther delighted to be eaten. All the necessary cruelties regarding the production and slaughter of meat, the labours of the harvest (which kept us more in sync with the seasons), are kept out of sight and thus out of mind. Yet although we hide our eyes from it, cruelty is a part of daily life by the minute, without the occasional application of which we would perish. Ignoring it does not mean it vanishes.

Much of the behaviour we now call ‘bullying’ is likewise unavoidable, natural and necessary to develop a tough skin. Not that it should be encouraged or allowed universally, just that it has been exaggerated into another social weapon in our climate of political correctness. As already stated, when there are more than two people or two ideas in the room there is a competition and nature decrees that one must win out and a hierarchy be established. You cannot do anything or have any opinion without disagreement and conflict with someone, somewhere, somehow. By retreating continually from the realities of inequality, we have also retreated from heroism. Compassion is great in small measure but it is of no use to anyone to castrate themselves out of pathetic vulnerability and guilt.

In the words of *Ragnar Redbeard's* infamous 1890 consequentialist essay, *Might is Right*:

“Mankind crieth out for kings and heroes. It demands a nobility — a nobility that cannot be hired with money, like slaves or beasts of burden. The world awaits the coming of mighty men of valour, great destroyers; destroyers of all that is vile, angels of death...We are tired to death of ‘Equality.’ Gods are at a discount, devils are in demand. He who would rule the coming age must be hard, cruel, and deliberately intrepid, for softness assails not successfully the idols of the multitude...In actual operation Nature is cruel and merciless to men, as to all other beings. Let a tribe of

human animals live a rational life, Nature will smile upon them and their posterity; but let them attempt to organize an unnatural mode of existence an equality Elysium, and they will be punished even to the point of extermination.”

The Romans built an impressive Empire of functional aesthetics. Roman roads still exist today because they built things to last. They did not shy away from cruelty (when necessary) because they understood reality more pragmatically than we do. They saw effect in the world and understood the agency of cause. It is the edict of nature’s sacred law, which they rightly interpreted as ‘*to be a force in nature is to use nature’s ways*’. Do you want to have a true legacy, create manifest good and real innovation, and achieve glory? Then you must restrain effete compassion as a primary virtue, and never lose the concept of *struggle*. To use an artistic allegory: the column segment must be painstakingly carved from the stone, it is not talked into existence.

Modern Westerners have been trained by Marxist word games and compassion-worship to attack themselves, to question, dismantle and distrust anything representing their own interests – to even police and censor their own thoughts. This sad state has been at least partially cultivated by the continued luxury of our convenience lifestyle, as men are not sufficiently testing themselves with cruelty and idleness lends itself to self-criticism. And there have been few epochs historically as idle as this late-stage, oil-rich civilization we see decaying and crumbling all around us. This self-attacking may appear to a cultural outsider to be an act of incredible politeness, in terms of self-depreciation, but it ultimately also paves the way for other, less advanced (but more confident) cultures to dominate us. Our weakness is couched in tolerance and despite its endless touting by politicians as our prime virtue, tolerance was not historically a Western virtue at all. These are the classical prime virtues:

Wisdom (*prudentiam*), justice, courage, temperance.

Tolerance is ultimately just being too weak to live by your own standards or enforce order. We actually enforce the reverse, a kind of individuality at gunpoint, which in turn actually squashes effectual or traditional individualism (actual unique personality) behind the veneer of an

easy morality – which is again compassion. The Modernist asks: “*Why can't I be an artist without learning technique? Why can't I call whatever I do art?*” Freedom and individuality are great but only once you are already within the framework of homogeneous goals.

It must be noted that the schism between the worlds of modernity and tradition were really torn irreparably during the cultural upheaval of the 1960s, a period famous for the ‘freeing’ of social mores without any thought to the consequences. This came upon a tide of carefully manipulated leftward shifting in popular culture. A generation turned to promiscuity and drugs and gutted their own future. They were manipulated by money power. Many years ago, ‘beat poet’ and appalling degenerate Allen Ginsberg threatened: “We’ll get you through your children!” This is what they did and are still doing this to this day.

The 1960s generation did, to their credit, enjoy some æsthetic music, which was really the impetus behind its power. Psychedelic rock leading into heavy metal and progressive rock attempted, for a time, to break back through the fog of simplified and somewhat goofy popular music to a new, more dramatic, even strangely Wagnerian oeuvre. This musical explosion was the only legitimate thing about the revolutionary Sixties and the creative power upon whose coat-tails the revolution piggybacked. As complexity compounded it was akin to an electric, aggressive classicism of sorts. Groups of like-minded Western men, when given license to unite, trend eventually towards originality and brilliance. That is, a patriarchal creativity (at some level a peacockish paean to impress girls) based on complex arrangements with a spirit of exploration that is subconsciously spiritual or Pythagorean.

Sadly, after a few brief decades, mercantile values superseded and their usual exploitation watered popular music down to a more mindless drivel than ever before. The useful tool they took from that era was the idea of music relating to youthful rebellion, which was then harnessed commercially and recycled every generation since in an increasingly soulless and bizarre corporate festival culture, with almost no quality or exploration to the music any longer, and without anything coherent to rebel against.

Without the very basic idea of making something pleasing or rousing, without that collective solar goal, art is merely an annoyance, an afterthought or a club for fey egalitarian drop-outs to express themselves impotently.

Any ill-thought endeavour must suffer its demise. Like an octogenarian punk, it is merely the gaunt frame of a aged, mohawked nihilist too entrenched to pass away. Indeed, even well thought-out endeavours must end. But if we allow traditional Western art values to die, we are also laying to rest civilization on the whole, and killing something it should not have been possible to kill, or could only suffer the illusion of death — a tragedy beyond proportions from any angle. For the moment, these false and juvenile hippy values continue to exist in a climactic limelight. As demonstrated by the ongoing money exchange in our upper art echelons, they can carry their illusions for a little while longer – the illusion being that they are being good for showing a contemptuous disregard for the knowledge of their ancestors, as well as for nature, from which the very worth of value or virtue is bequeathed. It is as if to say that the classical world gave us nothing of any note, that the Byzantine, Greek, Roman, the Medieval, Renaissance, Enlightenment and Victorian ages were a mistake, an unworthy distraction. And that everything previous to Duchamp and Picasso in the art world was wholly misguided, the lapdog to enslaving empires and servant of the slave masters.

These misguided ancients lacked the relativist, obscurantist ideals of a Postmodern tolerance mind-set, they did not understand that every person, every art, every idea exists in a state of magical equality, and different cultures and approaches to art are also all innately equal. People of the past like Dante and Goethe were such idiots compared with us! They did not even censor their own thoughts, rooting out racism and sexism, and self-flagellate for their privilege!

This relativism is obviously anathema to art — according to their rules, skill in drawing and painting is the last thing an artist should have, as it exhibits competitive shaming over those who are unskilled, an uncomfortable, visceral inequality.

Relativism dictates that all points of view are equally valid, depending on context or point of view. It is the formalization of the equality fairytale. Everything is subjective to a relativist. There are no hard truths and therefore striving for excellence is ultimately futile. Despite pure relativism being untenable and destructive, it has, without notable challenge, been one of the primary arguments used to dismantle art, culture and values. It is the predominating argument behind the peddling of limitless tolerance and universalism. Its folly lies in its naive trust, which fails to see that by dismantling your own natural position in a quest to see things from the other side, you will find your own position weakened.

A Modernist's relativism argument tends to go something like this:

Modernist: "I think that splatter of paint is art."

Me: "That's ridiculous, Rembrandt is art, that is a splatter."

Modernist: "This is my opinion and you can't make me change it, it is high art, very moving and it speaks to me."

Me: "Look, Rembrandt spent five years on one painting alone, and you can tell by looking at it. This splatter fell onto the canvas when I was cleaning my brushes."

Modernist: "Well, I partially agree with you."

Me: "Random splatters of paint are not art."

Modernist: "Discussing art is pointless — we're just going in circles."

So a vulgar, egocentric idea is introduced, championed selfishly and then never goes away because it was not utterly stamped out, mostly because you lose effort for arguing and just want them to be quiet. It makes you wonder how we managed to maintain standards at all before the twentieth century — it is as though a bug has entered our cultural computer and warped everything slightly. It is beneficial to understand relativism and opposing views but only so much as it furthers the future of your own people.

The only assurance a relativist world offers is that the basest idea will be celebrated out of a misplaced desire to support the underdog. That is, only the worst in all things will be permitted, to keep the illusion of unity within a diverse society of people with incompatible histories living in a forced, feigned collusion. In such a structure, everyone else can only be as

good as the best abilities of the very lowest tier. Westerners feel uncomfortably embarrassed by the breathtaking successes of their ancestors as it is. It does not fit in with the fashionable relativism, so our leftists have decided we must enact a vengeance upon ourselves. But even more cowardly, not even so much on ourselves as on our children and grandchildren.

There is no knitting circle or hobbyist organization imaginable, no matter how seemingly innocuous, that under correct circumstance is not fully capable of becoming a sycophantic Stalinist regime.

“Among those who dislike oppression are many who like to oppress.”
– Napoleon

Relativism in art means actual painting is now labelled realism or illustration to make room for every kind of crass chaos that might want to be called art. The everything is art relativists hold up a false mask of freedom of opinion, while of course carrying on the usual totalitarianism when you are not looking. It is very difficult to say why they see themselves on any kind of intellectual high ground for this reason, as the very vocations of intellectualism they represent are based on classical virtues that they claim no longer exist. They are like a whole societal substrata of intellectually adolescent floozies, only instead of cutting themselves in the bathroom over their narcissist self-esteem issues, they cut away at the foundations of natural order — and they cut with the saws of relativism.

When a person has an emotional investment in an idea, often no amount of logic will prevail over this investment. That is also the root irrationality of relativism, with its lazy morality, that fails to recognize that insisting ultimate truths do not exist is in itself espousing a kind of ultimate truth. How do we want to live? Is this not an important question, asked most ardently by our greatest philosophers? Modernists and progressives think that they have the final morality, the keys to utopia, and are not concerned with introspection.

Why did Raphael not have to compete for gallery space in Florence with canvases of random splatters? How did we retain standards for so long, when it seems now almost impossible to get them back?

The power of the progressive/Modernist left lies in the simplicity and audacious immorality of its language tricks, which rest in each assigned word (like 'racism') being an inescapable mental maze of superficial accusations, designed to combat healthy, instinctual ideas with accusations of prejudice. They tweak our fears about being portrayed as socially impolite. We all know well the politically correct forms of various descriptions and how manipulative and crass they are. This language creates an artificial dreamscape for your mind to wander in forever, a permanent vacation of fuzzy thinking and Pavlovian manufactured outrage. If you open yourself to this thinking, if you accept the invented language as reality, as with Artspeak, you will be lost in this controlled thinking — forever walking a phantom path like a caterpillar turned into a zombie by the Ampulex dementor wasp.

I have touched on how the words '*racist*' and '*sexist*' alone, despite being essentially meaningless, contain enough power of suggestion to permanently destroy civilization itself. The same power lays hidden within most of the art terms I have hitherto listed since Expressionism. *Conceptualism*? The word has loaded connotation, suggesting an intellectual creativity, concepts, a trendy newness. The cleverness of the name itself proposes and sets the stage, in your mind you are already thinking and expecting ingenuity. What you get is a toilet on a stage. Conceptualism is in reality an absurdity, there are no ideas there whatsoever, just a clever and manipulative name and the money to promote it, nothing more.

Abstract Expressionism as a name is less clever but its obscure wordiness alone still suggests intellectualism. Its obscurity proposes a mystery. But really, it is just kiddy paintings. Even when they have us on the retreat, their invented abstract art now the norm, traditional art gets further denigrated with the cheap and limiting label of realism. Again we are trapped in word usage that they control because they peddle it in the literature. Realism must now encompass every single artist for all of history before Kandinsky — just stuck-in-the-mud, boring realists. Phidias, Constable, Van Eyk, Vitruvius, all of them.

No, it is a game, words are tactics in a war and this one we must also reject. Realism sounds childish, tawdry, and unimaginative, which is exactly what Modernism actually is. These are merely parlour tricks from the money-power class.

As well as rejecting all of this, it is time we began to peddle some new words of our own, some of which I will get into later.

In relativism, we see exposed the incredibly complex problem of the division of subjective opinion, which is the centre of so many (possibly all) struggles. Because an opinion is forced on you does not make it truer, or better. Nor is it true for being popular, certainly not. A purely objective right or wrong opinion is very near impossible. But the fact is, regardless of it being relative, you must see things from your own point of view and fight to survive based on your strength to force your will upon the world. That requires confidence in your opinion and that opinions like all else will compete, resulting in a victory or defeat. Trying to see all opinions as true all at once is not correct and will ensure you fail and your opinion is removed from the chessboard. Being aware of relativism without getting lost in it only makes your opinion more likely to be balanced, wiser and stronger. But if ever there were an argument for objective excellence in art and culture, the pre-Modernist West would be the example. Tradition kept unity of opinion through duty and the opinion and duty were organically cultivated. Relativism as a cultural weapon is ultimately another example of the triumph of the materialist values of the merchant class. If we follow their path to its final destination, then a fully successful business class will have created a world-society of cattle, kept in total control for the purpose of a perpetual balancing act of soulless, numerical wealth – an unchanging twilight of sterile anti-creativity.

These are the throes of an overripe culture that needs spiritual rejuvenation. But we are nowhere near that yet and have only begun to feel the strain and discomfort of the looming cycle's end. For now, mighty paintings, buildings, sculptures and classical compositions revered for centuries are nothing more than tourist attractions, oddities of a fairy tale past, the remnants of a European creativity that has become impossible to continue. Worse than ignored, however, they are increasingly becoming

objects of scorn to be attacked and dismantled by the hard left, as we see currently with confederate and other statues across the United States. We crossed the threshold from looking upwards to looking downwards very quickly in recent decades.

The work of a man should be towards the betterment of his family, foremost, and from there towards long-term reputation with his people. He should be able to take risks and have a wide berth for his personality. Like our ancestors, he should be living in a natural state of competition, obeying the laws of the inward life and meeting fate with such nobility as he can muster. Equality and convenience values are compatible with a safe life but not with a good life. Tribal instinct is not going anywhere, though we do our best to suppress and ignore it. The furtherance and safeguarding of our tribe, as extended family, is the ancestral inheritance we have been entrusted with. That line must also in future be handed down the keys of tradition, to navigate this world, as we cannot experience the world outside the constituency of our wider family. How does this relate to art? It relates to everything. That is the natural love, the love of our parents, children, spouses, community and heritage.

When exceptionality is trampled in a materialist, egalitarian world, the resulting ugly society seems much less worth fighting for. When poets and laureates spoke of their home countries, represented symbolically by, for instance, the *British Palace of Westminster* (designed by *Augustus Pugin* and *Charles Barry*) or France's *Eiffel Tower* (designed by *Gustave Eiffel*), the symbology was real and inspiring at a tribal level. Identities, as a matter of pride, were visualized in the most impressive monuments to rational beauty, each in a style that spoke to that populace. Who exactly is inspired by a homeland represented by the metal blobs of corporate sculpture, or multi-coloured steel rods in random formations outside a civic office? What soldier dies in battle thinking in his heart how proud he is to be making the ultimate sacrifice saving all that Conceptualist 'installation art' for posterity, as opposed to fighting to save the treasures of antiquity, the artefacts in the Louvre, or the works of classical writers?

Meanwhile, even as we are reduced to this rootless consumerism, with a failing future, we are all terrified of committing the faintest inegalitarian

dissent when confronted by the ugliness and stupidity of these gargantuan architectural and sculptural mistakes. We allow our effete art academics to indignantly thumb their noses at the timeless and formerly unimpeachable statuary of *Donatello* or *Antonio Canova* (our inheritance) while praising baffling, visually meaningless blob-shapes and blow-up poodles and butt-plugs.

Our decay is fast approaching its nadir, when we must choose to be self-affirming again or dissipate into nothingness. If as naturally occurring a thing as beautiful art can be taken from us, what other values are next in line before 'year zero' egalitarianism wipes away every scrap of beauty and truth? As in every other context, the only defence is reason. To quote Aristotle: "*Tolerance and apathy are the last virtues of a dying society.*" Will we perish along with our art chicanery, now a vast, materialist money laundering game for our controllers? Will we let our history, the preeminent history of this world, simply die out in coddled apathy?

There is a superficially harmless sheen on the idea of abstraction in art but its roots are evil and vast. As we can see, abstract art and classical art are in a war to the death — *baseness* versus *idealism*. Modernism is an oppressive and artificial subjugation of thought, which requires vast and expensive networks of propaganda and social control that were easier to consolidate before the inception of the internet. It is very much easier for liberals and Modernists to teach children that our civilization is not worth saving when they see only boring Modernist box houses, soul-crushing industrial estates and bookshelves full of bestselling narcissistic chick-lit. We can only combat this confusing assault on the mind if we understand that the definition of art has been tampered with, and the nuances of an industrialized middle-man system which works in concert to maintain this deceit. There is nothing more baffling to our burgeoning artists who, when seeking their ancestral birthright art education, wind up with an absurd and confusing education in Modernism. Which like most liberal studies today is really a brainwashing in equality doctrine that makes the untalented think they are geniuses and the geniuses question if they have talent.

Art school – the fantastic joke

“The authority of those who teach is often an obstacle to those who want to learn.”

– Cicero

One of the most disastrous inroads the baby boomers made into Western societal foundations was the slow but totalitarian infiltration of education. It is now completely dumbed down and restructured around leftist principles of self-destruction — and not just in terms of art. Hordes of post-Sixties revolutionaries went into education at all levels and to this day rule emotionally and without reason over a system that recontextualizes everything around the equality myth. Art school itself is a chaotic whimsy only for the most hardened masochist.

Students who manage to believe the lies and embrace Modernist art theory can excel quickly in school, providing they stay within the deceitful confines of the abstract game. They busy themselves in the task of finding deeper and deeper gimmick, more poignant social justice narratives to apply to their heaps of garbage and monochrome canvases. When fully trained, these art elites will exude a contempt for detail, exactitude, technical skill, objectivity, spirituality or anything that reminds them of Western cultural confidence. They will exemplify outdated Freudian reasoning for which everyone around them pays a brutal psychological price. They will be the Joycean anti-hero, willingly subversive against a permanent state of imposed ‘slavery’ that is nothing more than basic reality. Eventually it is possible that they will accrue enough wisdom to admit the realities of life, a rare but not impossible event. Yet this will only occur after they have spent their youth damaging the world and attacking their own culture reflexively.

And so their supposed education is not just worthless, it is actually so cataclysmically detrimental it requires years or decades to recover from, if at all.

Avant-garde is a popular art school term used to describe new and experimental ideas and methods in art, music, or literature. It is still peddled today in art schools as the very cutting-edge, though their black turtlenecks are getting worn and their ponytails are quite grey. And their experimental ideas, which were boring and predictable then, are suicidally mind-numbing now.

Avant-garde is but another aspect of Modernism, indistinguishable philosophically, that represents the vanguard of shock theory and flabbergasting. The *Wikipedia* definition of avant-garde is as follows:

*“The avant-garde pushes the boundaries of what is accepted as the norm or the status quo, primarily in the cultural realm. The avant-garde is considered by some to be a hallmark of Modernism. Many artists have aligned themselves with the avant-garde movement and still continue to do so, tracing a history from Dada through the Situationists to Postmodern artists. The avant-garde also promotes radical social reforms. It was this meaning that was evoked by the Saint Simonian Olinde Rodrigues in his essay *L’artiste, le savant et l’industriel* (The artist, the scientist and the industrialist, 1825), which contains the first recorded use of ‘avant-garde’ in its now customary sense: there, Rodrigues calls on artists to ‘serve as [the people’s] avant-garde’, insisting that ‘the power of the arts is indeed the most immediate and fastest way’ to social, political and economic reform.”*

Indeed, to the avant-garde art is little more than perpetual leftist agitprop. The new purpose of overturning society as opposed to trying to uplift it has become the spearhead of the revolution of the non-creative, whose method of overturning civilization is to bore us to death. Art may seem a passing fancy, an impractical pastime in our late-stage world, but in reality it is the very vehicle of our progress, as its discarding is our undoing.

Modern art educators probably do not understand themselves that this is the heart of their schooling, that they are merely robots fulfilling a

programming. Their opinions are so poor and so objectively wrong they are beyond contesting or engaging with. If asked, they will say the purpose of the avant-garde is to ‘make the viewer think’, a facile and vapid statement that also denies refutation. No reason can permeate the bubble and they are lost on that hamster wheel. And so, no art will be created by them or people they teach.

Modernists do not just rule upper-level art institutions but all art education from pre-school. A child is not to be *‘limited’* by learning actual practical skills, and so learns nothing.

Burgeoning crops of actual artists get funneled (increasingly) into corporate work as illustrators, animators, layout artists and graphic designers — none of which are thought of as serious art and are generally low-paid and unfulfilling. More often, they become tradesmen, which in the past was also synonymous with being an artist but is now streamlined to only utilitarian function. In all these cases, any remaining trace of art revolves around advertising and in general, when going to work, it is best to be prepared to put your creative mind to rest.

With educational thought control in place, modernist dogma successfully masquerades as the culture itself. Modernism is the establishment, perpetually pretending it is the revolution — within its framework anything is allowable except actual art. It is a blockage, sustained by education, wasting the potential of our youth, who pay for education expecting to learn real skills or find a real niche but who get only misdirection, absurdity and lies. When Modernists took over the institutions, they swiftly turned all major art education academies into abstract irony-factories. From there, they have moved to subvert other accepted truths — such as gender, for instance, currently being ridiculously redefined in education and confusing our kids even further.

Additionally, Modernism in education has gone unchallenged for so long (in elite echo chambers) that most people no longer understand what true creativity really is. People are trusting and believe what their teachers say, and so believe art is random expression and not a serious study of cultural implications requiring style, structure and originality. Art exists chiefly for beauty, even if it is a tragic beauty, or a dark and brutal beauty –

but not for the sake of offensiveness, debasement, intentional absurdity or self-hatred.

“It is austere and profound wisdom that make great painters and great sculptors; one lives all one’s life on this foundation and if it is lacking one will only be mediocre.”

– *J.L. Gérôme*

A certain difficult-to-address aspect of art tutelage is the predominance of women in education, particularly early education, but also right through university (thanks to diversity quotas). Part of the problem is that their biologically mandated survival instinct makes them interact with the world in a completely different way than men, who were historically the custodians of art and culture (men were the culture, women were the people themselves, in charge of families and family production). Women interact with the world more socially, resulting in a greater predilection for both social conformism and universalism. They also make decisions for emotional reasons, as is their remit as biological caregivers.

Feminism and education

“To the much-tossed Ulysses, never done with woman whether gowned as wife or whore, Penelope and Circe seemed as one...”

– Robert Graves

While it sounds cruel to point out, I am afraid it is also necessary to speak of the female role in modern aesthetics – and while my view may not be strictly true in the case of every single woman, it is largely true as a group behaviour or aggregate trait. It is therefore true. When you abandon political correctness and realize equality is a figment, you come to enjoy ‘sweeping generalizations’ for the reason they are largely true. If they were not true (in the aggregate), they would not be ‘hurtful’. So this is not to criticize the few women fully capable of understanding causality and traditionalist concepts but, of course, they are also the women who understand they are very much the minority of their sex, the others being entirely at the whim of cultural trend and perceived authority, are as cows led into thorny pastures yet happy where they are placed.

“Man makes history; woman is history. The reproduction of the species is feminine: it runs steadily and quietly through all species, animal or human, through all short-lived cultures. It is primary, unchanging, everlasting, maternal, plantlike and cultureless. If we look back we find that it is synonymous with life itself.”

– Oswald Spengler, *Aphorisms*

Men are exceptional at creating culture, at least partly out of nature’s compulsion, to impress women. Exceptional women leaders and thinkers (such as Hypatia or Boudica) who do not interpret the world through the prism of entirely social or hyper-personal thinking are also exceptional enough to rise up within a functioning masculine culture without turning the

system upside down to facilitate or ‘free’ their entire gender. Which is what we have done now, so that we might pretend every woman is magically capable of everything men have done, something that proves instantly to be a lie (like a sparrow, quite excellent at being a sparrow, insisting it can do everything a fox does). The saturation of our society at all levels – in politics, judiciary, media and business – with unrestrained female opinion (enforced now by law) has undoubtedly feminized our culture. This is an enormous problem, larger than the art question itself, and you will find very, very few Western women today able to apply a discriminating hierarchy to almost anything, let alone art.

The truth is, a great swathe of the success of Modernism in recent decades has been its easy appeal to women and their ever-increasing say in society. They seem to have a greater tendency to succumb to social cultural edicts from perceived authority, especially if the message is enclosed in a story of compassion, inclusivity and acceptance. They will approach problems socially, which means the edict will not be questioned on its own grounds but judged on its perceived acceptance among peers. When a message is couched in terms of ‘acceptance’ or ‘tolerance’, in terms of doing away with discriminating standards, this will find an appeal to many women. In this tricky way, Modernists and corporatists can sneak into the culture many horrific, culturally destructive fads. Women are far less likely than men to question, on any grounds, concepts handed to them from authority. Many men have been themselves feminized by the gynocentric culture and their opinions are indistinguishable from the female.

Authority figures today are essentially seen to be the TV, media outlets and the college professor, each equally devastating politically correct nightmares. Women are less inclined as a group to sport opinion that has no social rewards. This too makes them very prone to the phenomenon known as virtue signaling – essentially, displaying political correctness for rewards in the form of social currency. The more astute women who are clued in to this inclination or have directly felt its ill effects will admit this.

Much of our modern populist media, music and consumer culture has been targeted increasingly at women – it has become more feminized, which means more emasculated. They are the ones buying the ‘products’.

Some 90 per cent of advertising is aimed at women and this is obvious when you look at any of it. Thus, as principal consumers of our fading culture, they are the largest target audience for the marketers and manipulators. Not only do women support these bad ideas economically, they are now largely creating the concepts, managing the marketing (actual production of goods takes place in India or China) so from start to finish it is a controlled, all-women feedback loop. They carp about equality and want to be in the workforce but not in the coalmines, sewers or foundries, so they seek work in managerial media and marketing roles, abetting the creation and sale of soulless cultural flotsam to other women. More often than not it is sold on the premise of equality values, appealing to vanity. “You deserve I” and “Just do what you want”, etc. Media and marketing are popular social, faux-philanthropist jobs low on physical labour that feminists migrate into naturally and the result is that feminists (which the majority of Western women still identify as) really control at every level, from production to consumption, this awful cycle of gelded pop culture. But even worse than the product of their labours is the manipulated distraction from their more vital employment: family and motherhood. And the further result of this is disastrous below-replacement European birth rates, which are setting us on a trajectory to a demographic disaster worse than any war.

The fact that the vast media apparatus has lost all vitality seems now beside the point. Women do not fare well when faced with conundrums like no-win situations, where you have to choose the lesser of two evils, rationally. Compassion is a biological reality of their lives and nobody expects differently from natural caregivers.

Women are indeed *not* the naturally creative gender, which is the opposite of what modern education tells us. What creativity is has become confused in the philosophy of Modernism that says all art is a subjective, random expression of emotions and not at all about practiced structure with standards and beauty values. Russian feminist ‘art’ group *Pussy Riot* say they do “*anything for art*” — they think there is creativity in simply getting naked or speaking about sex. There are many such cases. Largely, a woman’s tendency for security does not lend itself to an artistic vanguard and her emotional way of interpreting the world does not fit consistently with any of the sciences (true art being a science). There have been some

notable women artists, of course. But everything has exceptions (outliers) and, overwhelmingly and as in other fields, it is men who push historic art movements and accomplishments. This a natural limitation, as natural as men not being able to give birth, which is really the greater responsibility around which all the culture-creation orbits. Indeed, one of the main roles of the culture and all it produces is to facilitate the security of women and the future of the tribe with new generations. Men produce the culture but the women are the very material flesh of that culture, their role is innate and deep-rooted and to attempt to unbalance these gender roles is to go against nature, which is to invite death – and that is what we have done.

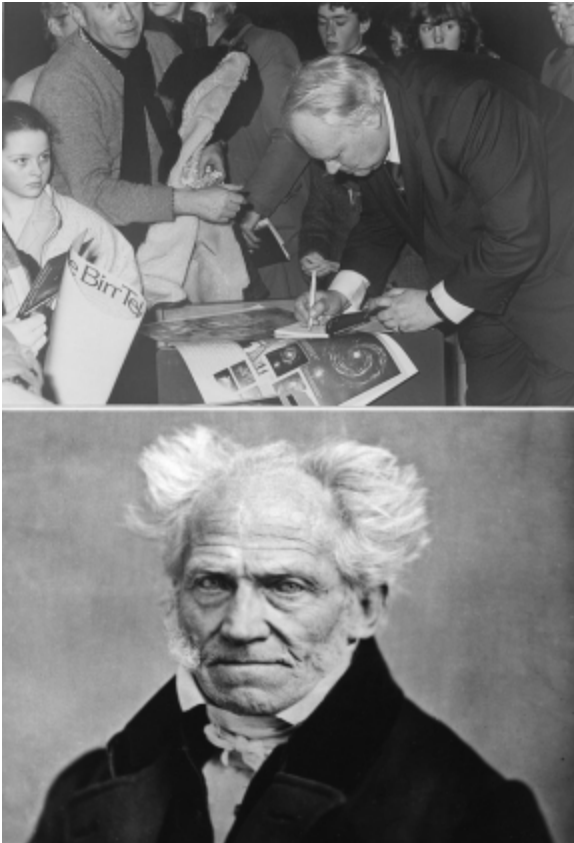
To quote a sentiment by *Arthur Schopenhauer*:

“One need only watch the way they behave at a concert, the opera, or the play; the childish simplicity, for instance, with which they keep on chattering during the finest passages in the greatest masterpieces. If it is true that the Greeks forbade women to go to the play, they acted in a right way; for they would at any rate be able to hear something.”

To modern ears this sounds cruel — but is he lying? Who has not experienced this? Women have a more important role than that of cultural marshals, to which they are not apt, and tend towards an irrational hyper-egalitarianism. They chat at the opera because, for healthy biological reasons, the social aspect is what is most important to them, not the art. Motherhood is the most vital role in human society, something that is a strictly female domain: motherhood and matriarchy of the home.

The world’s population is too high, to be sure, but viewing that problem with altruism is unrealistically self-deprecating. The will to survive, the reality of struggle that we are divorced from by modern convenience-illusions, becomes suppressed by the bored luxury of technology. We who invented the modern world are likely the only ones with the keys to saving it. If you doubt that women are ruinously over-represented in cushy but controlling art and media careers, then simply scan a magazine rack or turn on the TV. Nothing but peer-reviewed catty celebrity gossip and social henpecking. As the late BBC astronomer Sir Patrick Moore aptly quipped:

“The trouble is the BBC now is run by women and it shows soap operas, cooking, quizzes, kitchen-sink plays. You wouldn’t have had that in the golden days. I used to watch Doctor Who and Star Trek, but they went PC — making women commanders, that kind of thing. I stopped watching. I would like to see two independent wavelengths — one controlled by women, and one for us, controlled by men.”



*Sir Patrick Moore signing his book “The Astronomy of Birr Castle” - 1985.
Arthur Schopenhauer by J Schäfer, 1859.*

Bravo — but we all know that only the women’s station is permissible, the men’s would be labelled sexist. This is the illusory one-way street of surrender to relativism.

Another noticeable cultural effect of the slow rise of feminine opinion in controlling spaces has been the growing rift between what were once culturally and methodologically united art forms. Because feminism and other degrading trends have been on the rise, the more gynocentric culture is dominant (and still increasingly so) with the most popular TV

programmes, pop music, periodicals and often media websites being more in line with whatever feminine themes women as a whole (acting as a shoal of fish) wish to watch and listen to. Largely, you will find it is the usual appeals to vanity, social status dramas and causes to gush compassion over. Sadly, this vanity-media intensifies the negative feminine and not the good feminine (motherhood, true virtue, nurturing, increasing familial stability). And so these largely corporate forces peddle anti-family, ethnic universalism, Modernism to the masses and women, who are again geared towards social acceptance, tend to fall in line. This media gender hegemony generally means that our popular culture is trite, conformist and contains no scary, challenging or self-affirming themes — but is instead decidedly universalist, compassion-driven and based around social coercion (gossip, shaming, etc). Also disastrously, the ‘men’s culture’ that can still be found in consumerist media is increasingly geared towards dumbed-down everyman interests such as sports and cars. In this way, the division of culture to exclusively masculine and exclusively feminine aesthetics makes both lose virility and value.

There is much talk lately of the altruism of Europeans, the near dodo-like innocence and trust levels that allow outsiders and enemies to take advantage. I don’t recall seeing much evidence for this altruism in the history books, before the rise of third wave feminism in particular. We did once bring science and world knowledge to less developed countries but this was not done in an effete, apologetic way that was detrimental to ourselves — and reverse colonization was unthinkable. I believe it is not the world wars that made us suicidally pacifist but the peace since, and we have feminized our whole outlook so completely, with women and female opinion saturating all levels of employment, politics, education, and power, that we now hold compassion so high that we are culturally defenseless. And now a good portion of our men, raised by single mothers and in a feminist culture, are very low testosterone and seem confused, feral and lifeless.

Whenever anyone altruistically negates their own self-interest, there is this whiff of hypocrisy. When you see a man raving that he is a feminist, we all sense the insincerity. Again, with modern liberalism and Modernism, deceit and pandering themes of victimhood are paramount — they have the

same origin and aim. The scope of the problem is very broad, as you can see, though in a way very simple. Most of the people aware of our decline do not grasp that art is a crucial issue, a kind of ultimate cultural weapon that is currently owned by the forces aligned against our future, knowingly or otherwise. Do we believe in ourselves? Can we believe in ourselves again, in our ancestors and descendants? Will we allow ourselves to take our own side?

And so, our Modernist, effeminate world represents the absolute destruction of every goal considered good by our ancestors. It is a perpetual state of toothless capitulation, until the noose is finally tightened. Examine any bookshelf of historic literature and you will see it is entirely male. Those heroes and philosophers that comprise the entire content of old, leather-bound tomes on dusty bookshelves, unhindered by multiculturalism or feminism. Incredibly intelligent and hard-working historic men who were the very fathers of our culture, of the worldview that allows us to be anything or interpret anything, who manifested philosophy, art, science and culture out of nothingness by thinking, and thinking, and thinking a hole in the ground. Unobstructed, they acted by force of will or divine guidance, with goodness and truth aimed at self-improvement. Those men are truly now to us as titans or demigods, with a scale of achievement that is unprecedented, admirable by any measure, but obscured by lies today and not understandable to self-pitying materialists. Bookshelves of real knowledge are filled with the writing of European men. Again, in our gender-obsessed modern reality, this sounds biased or mean – but this is nature. It is the striving and the labour of men, often in pursuit of impressing or protecting our women, that ever made us great. In this patriarchal past, art was on equal footing with philosophy and science, united in the upward-striving drive. Today, art is a strange, impoverished hobby for retirees and street urchins.

It might be said there is currently some doubt over whether humanity is an organism worthy of surviving, as we devastate the world with industrialization and soulless (artless) urban crawl. At the same time, Europeans across the West are dying out from flatlining birth rates that are largely due to feminism. The sacred duty of a man is to fight and, if needs be, die as expendable. The sacred duty of a woman is to bear children. It

will take a titanic effort, not the least from women themselves, to overcome our group brainwashing and accept the reality of traditional gender roles. While women can be artists, art is, like other vocations, best kept largely the remit of a man, who will keep it tribal, relevant, sacred and rational. There has been exactly zero benefit to us from ‘women’s liberation’ and women today are living in a parallel, nonsensical reality that is the engine horse of our downward trajectory.

A society that moulds and sustains its young men during their high-energy youth will harvest the bounty of their creative output. Sadly, we have been gelding young European men on the altar of feminism and anti-tribalism for a few generations now and we reap no creative rewards.

Now that I have covered, roughly, the major symptoms of the disease of materialist values, we must examine why myth, spirituality, native religion and metaphysical ideas are vitally important in the first place, how they relate to art and why we must never abandon them.

III. Industrialisation and corporate mass-production

Here, we reach the third and final of our triumvirate of anti-æsthetic forces. Industrialization and mass-production have had a huge effect on art and craft – and not for the better. Originally, Art Deco house wares were a response to this dilemma, as items that could be mass-produced but with certain neoclassical values in mind. However, in a consumerist system of liberal democracy and corporatism, the mass-production inevitably pushes in one direction, that being quantity over quality. There are ways to have both modern technology and real art simultaneously but they require a

likely aristocratic (hierarchical) society where materialist economy-morality is not considered paramount.

Art and science

We have established that all good art is self-affirming, tribal, naturalist, spiritual and maintains instinctive standards. As a discipline of reason, it is also scientific.

Æsthetic beauty values were once intertwined with all facets of daily life. They were taken for granted as part of the unspoken rules of living in a unifying culture, which was an expression of the group identity. The Platonic ideals applied to all facets of human endeavour and the natural world. If you were a craftsman making something, you imbued it with decoration implying symbolic meaning and style in accordance with your culture. It doesn't matter what it was, or how utilitarian, one never forewent the æsthetic consideration, if it was so much as a spoon or a plastered ceiling. In this way, art and science were intertwined and an appreciation of art can be felt in strictly utilitarian things such as antique scientific instruments, the handwriting of documents and as an element of their thought and ideas. This is the natural way and this is culturally normal.

Modernism divorced us from this cohesion because it veered so far away from the rational or even the decipherable. Because art is now this ephemeral nonsense and has nothing to do with practical life or identity, it no longer has this symbiosis with science or utility. These subjects in turn, without art, are rendered dry, atheistic and applicable only to democratic materialism. The upward striving of the unified culture is shattered, where once they were all intertwined.

It is even further difficult to relate art to the sciences today because the sort of person who works in hard sciences has immediately dismissed modern art as completely inexplicable and worthless, thanks to Modernist theory which merely insists it is intellectual without providing proof. And such hard science people are not wrong, it is a complete waste of time. This analytical personality has no concept of art and craft as the learned, rational discipline anybody can acquire with study and application, the same as any science discipline. They have been told the same lie as the rest of us, that true visual art is an indefinable, effeminate expression of feelings. Of course, the truth is that an atypically great European man, a Renaissance man, is versed in art, philosophy and science equally and neglects no aspect of either as his interest takes him. But today, these worlds do not meet and there is a vast chasm between science disciplines and the artistic, one being rational and the other irrational, and neither then in full service of a united movement of culture. In the same way the artistic gender inclinations became more divided, the curve towards liberalism is not the evolution of upward-striving tree branches but the molecular dissipation of a geriatric nearing the corpse stage.

Of course, this sad schism is false and unhealthy and is completely temporal. An examination of the past, even the recent past, shows us the previous wholeness of all pursuits, under the guidance of traditionalism and the tribal spirit of overbecoming — and how fruitful it is.

For example, the great *Andreas Vesalius* (1514-1564) was one of the greatest physicians in history. What is more, he created all the masterful woodblock engravings for his 1543 opus *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* himself. And such a feat was not uncommon in his time. In each example, a sensitive understanding of the fundamentals of drawing are displayed, with shadow, tone, perspective and light direction. The woodcuts are considered with as much patience and care as the text.

This combination of scientific acumen and artistic draughtsmanship would seem an impossible feat for a modern physician (or even a modern artist), mainly because they do not study draughtsmanship to that level, or even have a sense of its value. Students today are not taught that fine art is a rationale that can be practised and learned objectively by anybody, and of

equal importance to studying physics or carpentry – that it is in a science of its own and art and science are interrelated in the traditional Western practice of exploration, which is our primordial cultural assertion, or manifest genetic desire. Standardized (and personalized) high-quality drawing and handwriting should be in the retinue of any self-respecting scholar. It may seem like adding an unnecessary layer of work or skill but as I have been saying, it is the grounding force that roots you to the past and to your purpose.

Art is falsely taught as an unexplainable feminine concourse of ‘raw creativity’ (actually uncreative non-judgemental chaos). In reality, the pursuits of art, music or philosophy are of equal importance to and consummately related to the study of mathematics, biology, history, geography, etc. The architect should have some understanding of sculpture, the geometrist of music and all of them of drawing.

Of polymath architects, there are few more notable than *Sir Christopher Wren* (1632-1723), one of the most acclaimed in English history. Wren was educated in Latin and Aristotelian physics and was an anatomist, astronomer, geometer and physicist — but he is best remembered as the architect responsible for St Paul’s Cathedral in London.

Architecture specifically was once a pursuit widely accepted as a branch of applied mathematics, implicit in the writings of the father of architecture, the Roman engineer Vitruvius. Wren understood well the power of building as a unifying outward pronouncement of a people’s identity and intent. In his own words:

“Architecture has its political Use; publick Buildings being the Ornament of a Country; it establishes a Nation, draws People and Commerce; makes the People love their native Country, which Passion is the Original of all great Actions in a Common-wealth.... Architecture aims at Eternity.”

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PRÆSENS figura
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 la ex parte variat: atque id soli
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Vesalius' *De humani corporis fabrica*, figure on plate 609, & Wren's *St. Paul's Cathedral*, interior of the dome.

This was well known to Wren and others in his time, although this wisdom is sadly discarded today — leaving our scrawling Modernist ant-hives to display our dedication to the rejection of the realities of Wren's statement and any other ideas that whiff of national identity. Like a spreading disease, this new non-nationalist architecture says only: we are dying now.

And so in the varied abilities and classical education of a man like Wren, we have an example of what was once the standard paragon of European education – the Renaissance man, so called for reason of the apparent abundance of polymaths during the Renaissance (a supposedly barbaric period). Like Wren, these men were cultivated in tradition, excelling in art and science equally as disciplines engaged in the pursuit of truth and beauty (which they understood as one and the same). They were also generally expected to have some skill or experience in the arts of

warfare, the science of strategy and manly arts such as dueling. There was no limit and their time was not wasted on domestic concern.

To elucidate the depth and variety of Wren's scientific and mathematical interests and achievements alone: he created a transparent beehive for scientific observation, an artificial eye, a rain gauge, a weather clock, studied and improved the microscope and telescope, experimented on terrestrial magnetism and longitude navigation, made observations on Saturn, mathematically discovered the length of an arc of the cycloid and constructed a highly detailed model of the moon for the king. But that is not all. He also studied and made some advancements to meteorology, agriculture, ballistics, hydrology and optics, and performed medical experiments — and yet his primary legacy is as the artist of St Paul's. Such a person does not seem to exist today and yet history shows us such a person is possible.

The widening gap between art and science rends the premeditation from our endeavours, robbing art of reason and science of beauty. Contrary to what modern atheists might say, there is no science without background belief, there is no attitude dictating that we must study the world without a certain moral underpinning. Conversely, there is no art without the same, or without a science of methodology. This schism between art and science steers us down avenues of tastelessness and vulgarity. For example, a few years ago NASA highlighted the scientific milestone of landing of a robot on Mars by having the complex landing vehicle broadcast music from the planet's surface, the first music of any kind heard on the Red Planet. This was a latent desire (likely subconscious) of those responsible to inject art into the achievement, signifying our arrival on a new world. For this monumental event NASA did not choose Beethoven, Bach or any of the heroic and undisputed musical titans, the artistic legends representing the very best of the people (Europeans) whose achievement this was. No, with heads down, they chose a forgettable pop artist's song in a cheap appeal to egalitarian urbanites who do not and will never appreciate space exploration. When the Curiosity Rover broadcast Reach for the Stars by former Black Eyed Peas frontman '*will.i.am*', it undeservedly marked his name in the history books, for the first song, so far as we know, ever played on an alien planet. Historic. It is like encountering aliens and instead of

showing them our greatest cultural achievements, having them watch a reality TV program. It proves that despite our high technology, we have enslaved ourselves to a vapid and pathetic self-denigration – cowardly plebeian appeasement, nonsensical and unnatural. The Western youths who were actually excited by NASA's achievement could only be insulted by such goofy platitudes. But thanks to this uncharacteristic short time preference decision-making, this is now forever the first song of the Red Planet, the paean announcing our Promethean declaration to Mars. That is not the behaviour of people who are proud or deserving of the achievement and it is an insult to long dead but unsurpassed classical musicians of the highest calibre that were overlooked. It is the remittance of the meek and defeated – even in an hour of triumph.

And what is the reason for such a poor choice, a choice that would rankle both Arthur C. Clarke and Richard Wagner? Likely, it was a PR move by a gaggle of useless but heavily educated marketing and HR people, trained in corporate managerialism and equipped with a social and superficial understanding of art and music. The Modernist or liberal answer to such questions is simply: why not? As though to suggest our best and bravest musical foot forward is discriminatory. Here, we see the hidden trap of equality-language in contemporary discourse. The 'why not' has a hidden sting. We can no longer tell the difference between high art and trash. Therefore, by reductionist principles we have nothing but trash. Modern man, proclaimed free and equal, is ultimately reduced to the sum of his lower drives. This technological marvel that can put robots on Mars cannot assert itself confidently enough to express an actual will to live but apologizes like a slave every step of the achievement.

A healthy system of education teaches fitness, art, science, metaphysics and world purpose in equal measure and as a single positive principle. Though we have interesting technology like the internet, seeing its application to people versed in proper aesthetics would be interesting, because as much effort would go into the beauty and aesthetic connotation as the function. Books will always be sacred and should return to their status as individual art objects, not cheaply mass-produced soft-cover (plastic) trinkets. To unify and wield knowledge in this Renaissance

fashion, with the power of hindsight and a purposeful avoidance of quantity over quality, would be formidable.

We should have already expanded out into the solar system, to carve giant Hellenic faces in meteor-rock and to drift in vessels like great bronze whales along the rings of Saturn. Without our historic marriage of art and science, intertwined in a culture of self-overbecoming, we are restrained from being as nature intended: proprietors of an expanding biosphere.

Digital art, photography and cinema

Modernists exclaim that everything is art, they believe they are undoubtedly right and have no problem foisting their view in a totalitarian fashion.

But why do we need art galleries if everything is art?

Many may disagree but none will assume there is a golden age of the visual arts just around the corner. We have also diverted a great deal of technological progress into facilitating new art mediums — not out of need or advancement but for the usual huckstering reasons of quantity consumerism.

Of the popular newer mediums, computer imagery is an offshoot that is commonly used in illustration and concept art. It might be said to have its merits but it also strikes the eye as somehow lifeless and there is a reason very few people hang these works over their fireplace. Such works can have no comparison with traditional art and will never fill galleries. It has something to do with their inorganic foundation — they are really more an exercise in technology. In creating digital art there is a convenient aspect of being able to take back mistakes all along the way, quite easily. Do not ask me how, but things like this are sensed in the finished work. It is digital, ephemeral, it can be interesting with its backlit tones but it is not engaging. There are fewer barriers between the humanity of the real brush stroke than the mechanized artificial layers of the digital pen; the human charm, foible, and chance becomes lost in translation in that computational jump to the world of pixels. The digital work may show skill, yet invariably it feels inorganic, something to be glanced over, not kept forever. There is just an

indescribable sense of lifelessness when compared with a painting — and while digital art may have its uses, it will not be replacing real-world art. It lacks the naturalism, the basic use of natural materials, the unpredictable charm of a real brush stroke, the flawed, visceral earthiness of organic pigments. When the power goes out, so does your digital art.

Digital animation (or CGI as it is commonly known) is equally dead. While interesting from a purely technological point of view, its application outside material sciences to general corporate media seems another misdirection. The creation of animated computer graphics, as seen in films, involves incorporeal technological processes, not conducive to a painter's style of creativity. It involves programmers more than artists. There is always something lacking the further away art gets from the direct work of human hands. The effect of CGI is really its total lack of emotional effect, which it swaps for a kind of strange but erroneous appreciation for digitized faux-realism, something that is incidentally overly fluid and also does not look real. The older film effects may not have looked real either but at least they felt like the real world, and the direct human touch of ingenuity. The effects of those films bear the mark of a maker's hand, and created the feeling that 'I could do this too with household items and hard work'. We subconsciously register the presence or absence of direct human handicraft, both in irregularities and personality, which in truth are the things that make life and culture worthwhile and exciting. The computer-generated inability to illicit proper emotional responses is similar to our inability to properly define music, in that it insinuates that real art and meaning are something closer to a metaphysical issue than a material one.

Photography is a trickier subject that involves a more graduated response. While there is a certain art to photography, photographers should not be called artists in the same sense as painters: photographers are capturing, not creating.

The two are as alike as real plants and fake plants. A painting's key feature is that it is unique. A photographer is an artist in the same way that a baker or a carpenter can be called an artist, photography not being in the same realm of raw creativity and mental vision as a painter, sculptor, musician, architect or writer, all of whom create entire worlds from nothing.

This is not intended to hurt photographers' feelings, as it is certainly an applied and interesting craft. But with the muddling of fine art definitions, photography has been cockily branded on equal footing as painting and other visual arts. Ultimately, you point and click a camera — yes, you need to know a few tricks, such as keeping focal point off-center (an aspect of the golden ratio) but that is merely one of about a hundred of the other skills required in painting. To make a *Rembrandt* requires a depth of ability and understanding that boggles the mind (of both novice and expert) and this inspires the spirit. Photography can never reach that level because it is more largely a technical process that does not involve the creation from scratch of a personal world of light, representing an illusion of three dimensions in imagined or invented colour, tone, shading, perspective and painterliness. The same can be said of sculpture, the process of which is far more involved than the retinue of skills even the best photographer can employ. This is also sensed in the results, despite all the usual appeals to relativism and subjectivity.

Painting has time dimensionality as well, where the man hours of creation are woven into the fabric of its being, which are perceived subconsciously, if not consciously, by the viewer — through things like multiple transparent colour glazes, or courageous and deft paint-strokes of perfect tone. All of these record the skill, imagination and the soul of the artist. Painting resolves before the viewer in a series of human levels that photography cannot emulate. Photographers do their best despite the condensed limits of the medium, which they try to make up for with clever staging, costumery or post-processing tricks that merely faintly mimic the painter's methods. Good photographers are honest about this distinction and it does not take away from the specifics of their trade. The irony of the photorealist trend in painting, which is the most deserving of the label Postmodernism as it is a cheap reaction to Modernism, is that they generally paint hyper-real subjects from photographs, almost of photographs. And the irony of stylish photographers is that they are usually making photographic versions of paintings. Irony is fine for a quick laugh but the irony loses its effect after 50-odd years.

Television as a medium is an interesting invention, mostly known as an extremely effective pre-internet tool for mass brainwashing. TV is crowd

control, a broadcast mass-deceit of illusory progress that soothes the social conformist into feeling good about the projected morality. Every seemingly innocuous advertisement is a seconds-long propaganda film selling you an instantaneous false world identity. Endlessly portrayed hyper-happy modern mixed-race people sell us worthless convenience objects — almost always under a message of individualism. ‘*You get to choose*’, ‘*do things your way*’, etc. The libertarian dream-illusion of individual freedom is packaged and resold endlessly with an intellectually insulting universality.

As a tool for defending and maintaining the illusion of Modernist art, nothing has been more effective as trusted and respected documentaries from so-called educational channels. For many decades, the TV has presented mocking and deriding accounts of our greatest historic artists, relics and civilizations, while continually espousing that the art timeline only gets interesting after Modernism. Presenters in art documentaries can be nauseatingly smug and more and more appear to be slovenly dressed feminists injecting gynocentric re-evaluations of history into their sermon. Even those who at first claim to be critical of Postmodernism will feel obliged to include condescending remarks about how a classic historical artist or movement was ultimately just a lead-up to the unsurpassed genius of the Conceptualists. Even those presenting specific programmes on Art Nouveau or the Baroque will show this taciturn obedience to their abstract cultural masters. In their world, an innovative historic artist’s prime appeal is in their invented allusion to predating Modernism with some messy or unfinished work – which they leap upon greedily, crying: “*Abstraction!*”

The victory of egalitarian culture is largely in its self-censoring. You simply will not know any better if you cannot get information on Art Deco, Impressionism or Romanticism without arrogantly alluding to them as mere irrelevant ‘steps on the ladder’ towards a superior modern art, which happens to be a crucifix in a jar of urine or an unwashed pile of teacups.

Unfortunately, this dishonest behaviour is a tactic that has had tremendous social success, mostly from the broad sense of authority mediums like TV command. None of these overconfidently opinionated TV presenters and supposed experts have the faintest clue how to even begin to replicate a painting by Turner, Ingres or even Cezanne. Nor could they

sculpt a Canova, Phidias or Donatello, despite their disrespectful attitude of superiority over these great men. Worse, they feel a cowardly impulse to criticize the masters for not sharing modern values, as they can so easily be labelled racist or sexist, or generally not of the morality of the now.

Luckily, much of this legacy media is falling out of fashion, the internet taking over from television as an education tool. While the money power is currently working to control and censor net education, for now reading the negative comments on articles about modern art exhibits is most gratifying, in a way that was impossible when the only option was screaming at the TV.

Cinema is a different matter altogether, a complicated craft involving many different disciplines all at once (writing, storytelling, photography, music). I think there have been many fine filmmakers with great ingenuity and that unlike digital illustration, it is a practice that must be considered its own art. However, it too has either run its course as a medium or been misdirected into avenues of stagnation. Most noticeably, a truly sickening political correctness ruins modern films, in a horrid I-am-being-brainwashed way that is impossible to circumvent. Indeed, it must be said that Hollywood, with its now notorious sordidness, has been rather suspect arm of degenerative propaganda for really a very long time.

Though film is not a traditional medium, it has in the past employed the use of many traditional arts to create emotional impact. Classical music, matte painting, model making, hand animation, make-up and visual effects, storytelling, drama, etc, have all been mixed together to great effect. But sadly, many of these crafts, which became developed in a film-specific sense all of their own, have succumbed to the materialistically cheaper but ultimately lifeless computer replacement.

There is no real love or appreciation beyond the temporary trendy kind for these imposters. You know the stop motion monsters in the Ray Harryhausen film are not real but you love him for what he has done. For bringing the cyclops and the dragon and Medusa and Pegasus to life in a way that felt accessible to anyone with a lump of clay. If you are a child, it inspires you to try it because there is an intuitive simplicity to it and if you are an adult it reminds you of your childhood. There can be no improving

his work with CGI, to even consider that robs his oeuvre of its innocence and excellence. It is like comparing the original Star Wars films to their awful money-grabbing 'prequels'. The latter efforts are boring and uninspiring, an exploitation of the earlier successes, while the former are alive, made with artistic devotion and human depth: muppets, real sets, carefully detailed models and animation done by hand. It may not look totally real, whatever that means, but it looks enjoyable and artful. You can appreciate or *feel*, without understanding why, the time depth of masterful and long-hour work that went into its crafting, the work of artists, not machines. There is no way to describe the audience reaction other than it is sensed. And we encounter the opposite in the prequels and newer films: a shiny, overly-fluid, lifeless corpse created by an endless series of zeroes and ones, which we view with a sense of numbness and boredom.

Another cultural artefact of older films that relates more directly to traditionalism is found in the formerly esteemed genre of the cowboy film, my personal favourites being generally those of Randolph Scott. What I notice and enjoy about these films is that the older ones (pre-1980) appear to be the last official record of lived solar tradition or chivalry; of paternal honour codes, the inherited conduct of men following a strict morality, unswayed by death or destiny.

Depicted in these films are the fascinating rules of honour, of how to conduct yourself with a willingness to fight and die, and warlike fastidiousness to truth. Herein rest the final remnants of the knights-errant chivalry and blood honour of the Normans and early medieval Germans.



Randolph Scott in Comanche Station, 1960, American CinemaScope.

The hero in these Westerns flinches neither at personal danger nor violence. Not only does he not flinch, he does not register the slightest change in emotion and speaks little but plainly and justly, maybe with humour or charm. But he never speaks with fear, regret or pleading. No occasion or adventure is so important or delicate that he would fail to fight for his honour when affronted, even on random whim. His fate has been measured out for him and he is accepting of where it takes him. His prime concern lies in not breaking his personal code of honour. The bad guys, who take the wrong route in life, and invariably get caught or killed, also to their credit do not waste time whining and crying with regret. They never seek sympathy, they simply march calmly to the gallows. In these films, the main difference between protagonist and antagonist is that the bad guys are concerned with cultivating wealth and the good guys with honour. Though either may die along the way, it is of no consequence. Even more interestingly, the good guy (usually Randolph Scott or Lee Marvin) may fall victim to the popular plot twist of finding himself set up or falsely accused of murder or wrongdoing but he does not waste his breath whining, seeking sympathy or even bothering to say anything in his defence. He knows himself to be innocent and that is all that counts — he retains his stoic quietude, giving the same simple one-word answers to questions. He has

accepted fate, from top to bottom, and wears the righteous mantle of truth, caring not for what happens because he knows, inside, that he is right.

He makes no outward signs of appeal because pleading is unmanly, so he waits to be vindicated by some honourable means. He does not indicate any reticence in his willingness to fight despite everyone now thinking he is the villain. His honour as a man is more important to him, but in a humble, Arthurian way — because his name can be disgraced and he can swing from the rope unjustly, but it does not affect the truth he knows himself. Internally, his honour is intact and that is where it matters. There is no cause for fear and no cause for doubt.

This bestowed code of conduct cannot be taken from a man, even in death. This is the *Ghibelline chivalry*, the *Roman pietas*. Watch these films and you can sense that the old way is the true way, not just in the sense of transcendent honour codes but in a purely natural and practical sense. The eternal inside us is what is important.

PART 3: The path back to a healthy art

Action versus work in a technological age

Working in the modern corporate world is about labouring long hours to make worthless things under the guidance of complete idiots. It is total moral and intellectual slavery under a system orchestrated around grinding down the dwindling margins of profit to be made on exploitative merchandising and crowd manipulation. The daily routine is a politically correct race to the bottom while maneuvering the insane egos of entitled feminists and conformist zombies. With extremely few exceptions, nothing of any value is being done. Even companies with moral objectivity are either trapped in the broader nonsensical victim culture maze or forced to work for globalist clients. The product and the work are a shadow of a shadow, the idea that work should have objective tribal purpose (optimistic lebensraum11), or even so much as basic functional meaning or creativity, fades more rapidly every day.

As a cog in such a machine, the main trick is to pretend you are not aware that you are completely wasting your time.

There is an association between Modernism and globalism in that each devalues both art and work itself. When the product of your labour is meaningless and the labour and the monetary cost affected are the only prime factors (the mindset of the globalist, which is an extension of the capitalist), then art, national pride, race, gender, family values and other vital human qualities need to be rendered meaningless as they are a barrier to continued business, to money power. This is the wasteland we find ourselves in, a rootless world of free trade and disposable plastics.

But beneath the surface, life retains root meanings that money power fears, causing it to fight with increasing intensity, the forbidden ideas reasserting themselves on the internet and in quiet pub corners, the forbidden voices that speak frankly. Those voices express the reality you will never see on a TV advert.

The Western world is not only dying from within due to these constraints on our artistic and spiritual momentum, it is also being buried under a landslide of environmental ruin. Our daily objects are made in overseas sweatshops by people that have no interest in their purpose. True diversity of locality and individualism (culture) is absolutely lost in a global vacuum of generic chain-store mass-production. This is perpetuated by a managerial class of accountants, economists and council workers who are now utterly materialist and devoid of any sense of tradition beyond social signalling of their 'tolerance'. Their goal is the furtherance of the middling IQ consumer zombie horde, which is a population of castrated walking barcodes. Our food cycle is unsustainable (soil erosion, tasteless and dangerous GMO crops, pesticides) in a nonsensical system under which goods are imported and exported around the globe, as opposed to grown and consumed locally and seasonally – as is natural. At every strata of this system people are doing unthinking, mechanical work, obeying the edicts of corporatist culture and globalism. It is a merchant's dream world.

"America ... has created a 'civilization' that represents an exact contradiction of the ancient European tradition. It has introduced the religion of praxis and productivity; it has put the quest for profit, great industrial production, and mechanical, visible, and quantitative achievements over any other interest. It has generated a soulless greatness of a purely technological and collective nature, lacking any background of transcendence, inner light, and true spirituality. America has [built a society where] man becomes a mere instrument of production and material productivity..."

"...The Roman never would have thought of making labor a sort of virtue and social ideal. And Roman civilization was no civilization of slackers, loafers, and 'idlers'. The truth is that at that time, one had a sense of distance. To 'work', one opposed agere, action in its higher meaning. 'Work' corresponded to the dark, servile, material, indifferent forms of

human activity, with reference to those for whom activity was determined only by need, necessity or an unfortunate fate (the ancient world knew a metaphysics of slavery).

Opposed to such people were those who act in the proper sense of the term, those who devote themselves to free, non-physical, conscious, deliberate and to some extent disinterested forms of action. Even to those who exercised material activities, but with a certain qualitative character, and on the basis of an authentic and free vocation, the term 'work' was not applied..."

– Julius Evola

Evola is, as ever, astute. This ancient concept is hard for us to fully grasp but is important. This is not to say work as a concept is not important. It remains of paramount importance and to be valuable individuals we must each of us maintain a strong work ethic. But the actual end product of your labour is even more important. The end result of work has become a kind of alien concept, of little concern, which we have become divorced from and apparently see as being of no consequence. We see only the paycheque. For work to have real value, it must transcend and be in itself ennobling, in the very least directly resulting in sustenance or a personal, tangible result (farming, hunting) beyond the immediate monetary. It should be committed honestly and with purpose beyond satisfying the blind whims of the money-leader. This work we must call action, as it is resourcefulness and apart from wage or direct slavery. It does not matter how hard it is, overcoming the obstacles to reach a lofty goal is what is important.

This action, which as Evola insinuates is work towards noble individual goals, can indeed be far more heavily taxing and exhausting than work. It can also come at a much higher price (military action or physical self-defence must be considered action) but at every stage the end result is purposeful and ennobling, both individually and tribally. Feeding yourself and family without outside help, imbuing creative artefacts with a sense of tradition and mythology, securing libraries and teaching proper knowledge to the young and making things as you need them with readily available resources – all must be considered action.

Restorative traditional work on historic buildings is often undertaken now by low-paid experts or unpaid volunteers, seeking any kind of escape from the artless mechanized toil of Modernist construction – which is essentially various ways to form cement as economically and blandly as imaginable. The end product of Modernist construction is invariably uplifting neither spirituality nor aesthetically and does not inspire a feeling of optimism for the future. Often, modern materials are also not enduring and tend to be environmentally toxic. Hence, all the effort required is, despite its intensity of invested labour and capital, ultimately a waste of time, no matter how superficially functional. We create the highway so that the car can move from home to the workplace to plan the next highway. And the men working on these meaningless utilities often crave nothing more than the chance to work on traditional constructions, which require both mechanical ingenuity and creative craftsmanship, and have historic tribal relevance. This enriching and future affirming option is not available to them and there is nothing to be proud of in their efforts.

I will reiterate that none of this means we should abandon work and take the route of sloth and leisure, by any means. Indeed, this realization dictates that we should redouble our efforts, as it is doubly hard to work for oneself and simultaneously against a system that wants to see us all as herded cattle in a controlled suburban grid.

It could be said the classical liberal American and French Revolutionary idea of work as the vehicle by which a man essentially frees himself is the counterpoint to the Roman idea mentioned by Evola (which included a metaphysic for both slavery and voluntary action). Not to say the classical liberal idea was wholly wrong or bad, just that every idea or way of life has its counterpoint or trade-off. For the classical world, it was more overt slavery and cruelty, whereas we have a (no doubt short-lived) suicidal universalism. Like it or not, our way is temporal, unnatural and fragile. It will change by necessity. There is no effortlessly compassionate or even bloodless way to do anything. Whatever comforts and homogeneity of opinion the past few centuries have afforded have reached their autumn and are now the agents of our poisoning. The American view of work and labour is the result of the freeing of the common man, to each be treated as a kind of sovereign nation unto himself. The character of the man at large,

however, does not generally allow for a full grasp of those higher principles that tradition formerly protected. Now more than ever, those who occupy the lowest strata of ability or acumen shape our civilization. In this sense our modern concept of work, or the cult of work (encapsulating industrialization, free trade, distribution, money lending, mass-production) means this work or labour has lost any higher value, or any trace of the pursuit of creative tribal or individual self-betterment or elevation — attributes even slaves of the classical world could at least claim in their daily chores.

This world of false freedom exists without higher meaning, work is performed without purpose in the blind generation of wealth for hidden, unaccountable oligarchs.

Nobody but the aloof money-power elite is afforded release from the ethical commitment to this insolent cult of work, which increasingly consumes available man-hours that could be spent on action. Additionally, we have the further anti-slavery posturing of the modern welfare state, where the truly idle are treated as nobility and handed money to merely exist and commit rampant dysgenic breeding.

Before mass industrialization, if you needed a basket you wove it or got one from your local weaver. It was woven from natural materials, it was not lifeless, temporal or toxic, made in China and bought from a globalist franchise. The system that existed supported the creation and trade of locally made goods and this is the secret to creating culture. The merchant class does not understand or care for the underpinnings of culture, beyond how to exploit it. The linkages are clear between usury, loss of local crafts and exploitation of free trade by corporatists — which equates to the loss of community and local jobs, anti-nationalism and the degradation of our living environment. Today, to be a traditional boat-builder or cooper is to be a craft hobbyist of sorts, of dwindling specialized patronage. When everything you use and see is foreign and purely utilitarian, there is this terrible cultural price. Despite the immediate desire for a bargain (the globalist objects are always cheaper), there is a hidden long-term cost of immeasurable rootlessness. Every single one of these daily transactions is a losing, microcosmic replay of traditional transcendent values against the

nihilist consumerism of the merchant class. People of taste now have to seek, often at greater expense, environments where they can be surrounded by their own traditional and natural handicrafts. Inflation in the cost of living ensures the locally crafted cannot compete monetarily with the cheap mass-produced toxic plastic items. What Modernism does not swallow up, squalor does.

Working with your hands, to make things you need yourself from natural local materials, is an example of action versus work (in the Modern slavery sense). Simple stone walls evolve into cathedral spires. Celtic knots evolve into a religious æsthetic tradition. None of these things require or have anything at all to do with middlemen, marketers or economy profiteers. Action requires all the same effort as slave labour towards a currency, even more so. Idleness is always an evil and the end product of your labours should never be out of sight, or anything less than of the highest consequence. If a purposeful end goal is out of sight of your daily grind, then you are truly a slave. Worse, you might be, as most of us are today, a slave to a machine that is intentionally and slowly putting your people through a meat grinder.

Just to survive, many of us are trapped in these meaningless make-work jobs, creating crass desideratum of all varieties. Armies of marketers speculate the profit points on one product or another, divorced completely from its ultimate value or cultural worth. Confused and manipulated, we squeeze what last drop of enjoyment can be had from the dying embers of a formerly blazing creative fire.

Our technology has made us slaves to this machine. The non-living entities known as corporations have a more bloodthirsty will to live than living men. Our ongoing trends and revolutions are perpetually bottom-up disasters, with an ever-lowering standard of allowably expressible intelligence. The modern man sits in his cubicle and should he need something, he has lost the art of making it himself. He has made a cage of his own supposed freedoms, reliant on a system that now turns against him.

Work is life and will always be necessary but if those who understand action control the end result of work, the labour will have an optimistic goal that benefits all concerned. Shared goals are nearly impossible in

multicultural societies, which further complicates these difficulties. Multiculturalism itself is an offshoot of the same materialist, industrialized forces of faux-egalitarian exploitation that created our contemporary malaise.

If your daily activity has no active value, beyond the money earned, your life itself is wasted. Whether you live or die tomorrow is less important than that you do not waste your time while here on Earth.

The power of myth

As we can see from the influence of The Iliad, you can judge the richness of culture by the measure of its myths. The poet and bard were for many centuries considered the supreme artist.

While Westerners as a people remain brainwashed into viewing our past as barbaric, undesirable and done away with, we will nonetheless never find solace in the empty consumerist present. Distanced from our myths, we are like newborns, adult babies that spring fully formed from the mid-twentieth century — without inherited virtues, objective values or the metaphysical grounding that totemic myth provides. Reference to anything before the 1940s seems too distant to comprehend. Nowadays, it is extremely rare to see a classic opera portrayed in the time period and setting they were intended for, such as Shakespearean England or Imperial Rome. Usually they are ‘re-imagined’ in a Second World War setting, with the ruling authority (Romans, Elizabethan monarchs, etc) represented as imaginary proto-fascists. Everything is adjusted to fit with the post-Nuremberg values of authoritarianism, displacing Satan as the ultimate evil. For the progressive Modernist, the universe began shortly before the Second World War. The average person apparently cannot register historic themes predating that — certainly, not the average stage producer. Modernists can only ignore or deride foundational myths, disregard them as immaterial fiction. The tribal realities hidden in myth do not fit in with the egalitarian fairytale. Foundational myths, rooted in the truth of nature, are by their definition simply too unabashedly self-confident for our altruistic age. It is too cuttngly real for the delusions of the luxuriously over-civilized.

Everything that makes us who we are lies within these myths. Their power can transcend war and religious upheaval, sometimes altered but always serving as a guiding light (to the past and future). Traditional myths

are generally mysterious, moving, unpredictable and archaic but always spellbinding. In order to feel archaic, they usually have a weirdness factor, that is there will be a paradoxical element that can almost be understood as a flaw yet in fact adds to their realness, sense of tragedy and the eerie echo of the very distant past. Myth is an expression of a race's impulse to define the world, as is all meaningful art. It is the hidden psychic united mind floundering its way through intersecting information streams, towards the transcendent future event. By substituting race with 'community' to obey political correctness, you take the deep root out of the definition and render it meaningless. To each group, there is unique legend. Myth and art are the same, one intersects the other, and if we lose our myth, we lose our grounding. Egalitarianism is false and deconstructive and tribal distinctiveness is to be celebrated. Therefore to regain a healthy, living culture we must all have intimate understanding of our historic myths, be unabashedly proud of them and have belief in their core morality. The Elizabethans and Victorians, despite not being Greek or Italian, knew by rote the classical Greek and Roman mythical canon in the original languages, so strong was their understanding of its value. They were culturally and intellectually richer for it, having the pagan beliefs and ancient stories as a juxtaposed archaic influence alongside their devout Christianity. There are so many excellent varieties of myths as example, from so many different Western cultures, that I will choose to focus on one with relevance to our present situation – the legend known as the King in the mountain, or the sleeping king, or the seven sleepers.

This tale serves as a warning, a metaphor and a prophecy that is eerily poignant for us. Variations of this sleeping hero appear as a motif in folktales that emerged from oral tradition. Later incarnations came to superimpose popular national heroes, such as King Arthur, Charlemagne and Frederick Barbarossa. In these stories, the legendary heroes are not dead but slumbering within a secret cave on a mountaintop, or sometimes on a remote island. The hero or king is said to be awaiting a summons to rise with his knights and defend his nation in a time of deadly peril. Christianized versions relate his return to the biblical apocalypse and the final war against Satan.

But of course, these myths predate Christianity and originate in a more obscured primordial tradition, their roots buried in our soil and psyche. They echo through history, a wandering truth or an idea waiting to become true, through the matrix of information and synchronicity — fogged in metaphor and legend like the hero himself. They emerge in modern fairytales such as those of Tolkien and in our subconscious desire for tradition to save the future. These magical archetypes are the impetus behind a majority of tribally valuable visual art, music and literature. While ephemeral, they captivate the imagination in a way that can only be considered real.

They are more real than anything we will find in our degenerated consumerist culture today, where a sterile facsimile or ghost of these ancient archetypes is occasionally revived to sell cinema tickets. Zombie-like consumers comprehend only a lingering superficial trace of a deeper meaningfulness — and reach for it regardless. Legends like the sleeping king insinuate antiquity itself, or even the wheel of eternity so often represented by concentric circles in ancient European art. This is the circular instruction of life, the return to greatness after the fall and the sweet spring banishing the death of winter. The legend has roots in end-of-days predictions that have been with us for thousands of years.

Plutarch (46-120AD) spoke of a legend of an island where *Cronos* (*Kronos*, *Chronos*, deposed father of *Zeus*) is imprisoned with Briareus keeping guard over him as he sleeps, and that around him are many deities, his henchmen and attendants. Cronos has been confined by Zeus but remains lord of those islands and of the sea, which is named the Gulf of Cronos.

“The natives have a story that in one of these (islands) Cronus has been confined by Zeus, but that he, having a son for gaoler, is left sovereign lord of these islands ... Cronus himself sleeps within a deep cave resting on a rock which looks like gold ... Birds fly in at the topmost part of the rock, and bear him ambrosia, and the whole island is pervaded by the fragrance shed from the rock.”

– Plutarch, Moralia XII.

There seem to be traces in Welsh and Arthurian legend derived from this myth of Cronos as a god imprisoned on a North Atlantic island. There is also relation between this Cronos as sleeping king of the blessed isles and the legend of Apollo in the land of the Hyperboreans.

Cronos was Saturn to the Romans, after whom we have named Saturday, and he is known to us as father time, or the God of Time, with his scythe or sickle. Cronos was also known as a Wise Old Man and with the sickle he used to castrate his own deposed father Ouranus he taught the people animal husbandry and cultivation of crops (before taking his magic nap). The golden age he inaugurated once before is said to return when he reawakens.

Northern pagan teutonic myths have their own version of this in the legend of the seven sleepers, in which Mimer's seven sons rest in a magic sleep in the Underworld, awaiting the blast of the horn of Ragnarok. This horn hangs in a cave and turns into a dragon if anyone tries to seize it. Parochial variations can mean the myth travelled and evolved across borders, or has a mutual Indo-Aryan root before the formation of these early empires. This cross-fertilization of European myth variety indicates the influential root power of the concept – or the reality of its prediction.

In the Scottish version, the horn hangs from the roof and when blown three times, the sleepers will rise. A shepherd discovers the cave and blows the horn twice but stops when he hears a voice say: *“If the horn is blown again the world will be upset altogether.”*

He flees, leaving the warriors resting on their elbows.

A very old version of the Gallic legend is recorded as follows:

The Fians (sleepers) were lying in a cave, each resting on his elbow, chin upon hand, self-absorbed, not asleep.

*They heard the falling waters,
and the storms went over them unheeded.*

Thousand of years went past.

*They were still resting there, musing,
when one of them moved his elbow and said:
'Och! Och! it's me that's tired'
Thousands of years went past
They heard the falling waters,
and the storms went over them unheeded.*

*Then a great Fian said sharply,
'If you do not stop this wrangling I'll go out,
and leave the cave to yourselves.'
Thousands of years went past
They heard the falling of the waters,
and the storms went over them unheeded.*

These ancient, unfathomable seven titans slumber as archetypal reality in our collective psyche, immortal yet (paradoxically) whimsical, human and yet predominant. Here again is a feeling of mystery that compels, this archaic feeling that captivates us in a way we can only describe as religious or spiritually heroic – keeping alive the flame of courage and concepts of divine monarchy, the idealism of nature-values. Fairytales were once as good as real, for much longer than they have been merely imagination; fantastic or exaggerated ideas of hidden world powers no less indifferent or unfathomable than those we know as tangible. Myth is the conduit of transmission for vital hereditary information from our ancient ancestors that transcends time and language, to give us wisdom. The poet was the first true exalted artist and probably should remain so today.

In the Christian era, the brothers *Wilhelm* and *Jacob Grimm* (born 1785) popularized the myth of the king in the mountain when the real Frederick Barbarossa became exalted in folk legend as the personification of the good king. The brothers tell of this tale in their early nineteenth century collection of German Legends.

In life, Barbarossa fought for the Holy Roman Empire against forces of social political reform. The materialist and egalitarian merchant class had risen up and attempted to re-create the Holy Emperor as a mere politician. Barbarossa destroyed them in the name of divine monarchy and was seen as

a spiritual and nationalist victor for the principle of divine authority over mercantile politics, politicians being then, as now, materialistic opportunists wielding power based on coercion and devoid of higher principles. With their defeat at the hands of Barbarossa, these rebels came to be thought of as ‘against God’ and were dealt with by the avenging sword. Divine monarchy was restored... for a time.



Monument to Frederick Barbarossa, part of the Kyffhäuserdenkmal in Germany.

Yet according to the legend or mythical interpretation of his story, Barbarossa did not die but slumbers within *Kyffhäuser Mountain*. His red beard has grown through the table at which he sits. His eyes are half-closed in sleep but now and then he raises his hand and sends an emissary out to see if the ravens have ceased flying. In the Grimm brothers’ version, the hero speaks with a herdsman who stumbles upon his hidden cave. The sleeping King asks: “*Do the ravens still circle the mountaintop, boy?*” When the herdsman tells him they do, he replies: “Then begone! My time has not yet come.” The herdsman usually emerges from the cave with his hair turned white and often dies after telling his tale.

The legend then states that when the ravens cease to fly and Barbarossa re-appears for the final battle, he will hang his shield on a dead tree, which then comes to life: “*And the dry tree will bloom again.*”

It heralds the return to nature and the abandonment of the materialist cycle. Within the European psyche, we seek ultimately both the action of

the apocalypse made real and our salvation through an ancient heroism. We want to meet our fate with honour and classical tragedy. But the myth is based on *reality* — Barbarossa was a great king. His principles were sound and his action on the world phenomenal. His war on the merchants (whose purpose we can only barely grasp today) was a manifest testament to his courage.

Myth evolves from such hidden pathways, it is rooted in the spirit. We are stirred especially in reminiscence of past heroism, sacrifice, struggle and adventure. When a people or a person need strength in unity, there is a tribal spirit that can be communally called upon, the rallying call of deeply felt shared history. It is the waking being and becoming of a people, who warm their souls around a flame of mystery, fighting to understand its archaic revelation and the music of its primal creativity. What are its origins? A hero long forgotten, hidden in a burial mound or mountain? His folk legend passed and exaggerated. And perhaps a new individual, yet to return to us and claim this spirit, or have its legend foisted upon him. Or the primordial giants of the Fian or the preternatural Cronos? Whatever this legend might mean, it evokes the sacred cycle.

Heroism, chivalry and sacrifice are the paternal tradition. They are eternal concepts. Even when they are ignored or suppressed, they exist in their own realm, unchanged, unmarred, providing a man safeguards them. They exist and they are there for the grasping, so long as the courage of the people or individual is there. It was myth that began our civilization and myth is the inspiration of transcendence through struggle that gives it backbone. Though ancient legends now seem distant from us, they are only so removed as we are safe, for the moment, in an artificial luxury that modernity creates. Myth is the mechanics of art and culture.

And so the ancient legend resonates and offers hope, the titans or the Emperor will be returning one day, for a fight at the end of the world. Such a tale nourishes the hearts of children. Heartened by purpose, an echo of ancient augury from the fertile past points our expectation to a future. Or even in the absence of that, to a glorious end, without regrets. Even now, the myth of the sleeping king is with us, disguised as historical reality or metaphysical metaphor for a real event, and the future is prophesied.

Perhaps even more importantly, at the root of the evolving motif, and illustrated plainly in the true story of Barbarossa the man, is the struggle of sacred hierarchy against materialism.

Creating for ourselves new forms of primal spirituality may be the highest function of a new art. Whatever we really are, we are pushed into this existence to improve ourselves and our surroundings. To sow and harvest beauty in the world, a job that is no small concern.

And when we return to this work, the dry tree will bloom again.

Spirituality and primordial tradition: Western religion & the plane of perfect reason

As mentioned, no small part of the West's artistic decline has been the rise of materialism, mammon-worship and the fall of variations of traditionalist spirituality. Namely, during the last century, this has chiefly involved the fall of Christianity — very gradually and painfully, and without a supplanting faith. Or, if you like, a supplanting belief in egalitarianism and atheism, which is a kind of drab belief in not having beliefs. Any thesis on the subject of art and culture requires a discussion of religion, as regardless of how you feel about it, faith and morality are the prime motivators of culture. It is my view that recognition and reverence of the sacred mysteries is vital for both individual and group survival. A broad review of the shared aspects of historic Western faiths is helpful here: how they shaped history and why it is important to have a certain sense of spirituality, whether the ascribed religious myth is strictly believed or metaphoric matters little. Speaking for myself, I advocate for Neoplatonism, a philosophy and reason-based religion that upholds ancient spirituality, that can be practiced by agnostics, Christians and pagans alike. Atheism is irrelevant to this discussion, as it is generally an overly negative petty nihilism and agent of degeneracy. Man requires a framework for his activity and where you find that focus you will find meaning, progress and true art. If you are reading this, then life is happening, it has no reason to spring out of a placid eternity of nothingness for a finite, pointless existence, then back to nothingness (by what energy and to what end?), and the self-evidence of our existence means a sacred mystery is at work, though a mystery it will perhaps remain. Traditional European faiths provide our framework, transmitting our mysteries over generations, and while for some this chain has been broken,

for others it is unbreakable. If we seek tradition, we will soon find Platonic transcendentals, metaphysics, esoteric initiation and sacred hierarchy.

“ Therefore we must ascend again towards the Good, the desired of every Soul. Anyone that has seen This, knows what I intend when I say that it is beautiful. Even the desire of it is to be desired as a Good. To attain it is for those that will take the upward path, who will set all their forces towards it, who will divest themselves of all that we have put on in our descent ... until, passing, on the upward way, all that is other than the God, each in the solitude of himself shall behold that solitary-dwelling Existence, the Apart, the Unmingled, the Pure, that from Which all things depend, for Which all look and live and act and know, the Source of Life and of Intellection and of Being.

“ Beholding this Being—the Choragos of all Existence, the Self-Intent that ever gives forth and never takes—resting, rapt, in the vision and possession of so lofty a loveliness, growing to Its likeness, what Beauty can the soul yet lack? For This, the Beauty supreme, the absolute, and the primal, fashions Its lovers to Beauty and makes them also worthy of love.

“ Therefore, first let each become godlike and each beautiful who cares to see God and Beauty. So, mounting, the Soul will come first to the Intellectual-Principle and survey all the beautiful Ideas in the Supreme and will avow that this is Beauty, that the Ideas are Beauty. For by their efficacy comes all Beauty else, but the offspring and essence of the Intellectual-Being. What is beyond the Intellectual-Principle we affirm to be the nature of Good radiating Beauty before it. So that, treating the Intellectual-Kosmos as one, the first is the Beautiful: if we make distinction there, the Realm of Ideas constitutes the Beauty of the Intellectual Sphere; and The Good, which lies beyond, is the Fountain at once and Principle of Beauty: the Primal Good and the Primal Beauty have the one dwelling-place and, thus, always, Beauty’s seat is There.”

– Plotinus.

1) Post-Christian materialism.

The West might be said to still be Christian, albeit somewhat superficially, but it is more or less impossible to be classically Christian in

the modern Western world. There is no arguing that our remnant morality is based on Christian values but it is like a shade whose spirit has fled, an ivy still clinging to a wall though it's roots are severed. We uphold a morality without a wellspring and its values flit here and there at the whim of corporate marketers and uncontrollable, insane feminists. It does not matter if you are an atheist in terms of the innate values you feel. Your morality, subconsciously, is Christian. If you had spent your formative years being raised Muslim, communist, Confucianist or Hindu, you would have a different innate sense of right and wrong. People do not realize how malleable moral views can be. Your pagan Roman ancestors might have thought nothing at all of strolling past a hillside of exposed babies, for example, as they went to watch slaves being slaughtered at the colosseum. Medieval children used to flock to hangings and beheadings.

However, it is now false to say the West is Christian and indeed its present morality is only a cherry-picked bastardization of the most consequence-free Christian teachings, and of those only the meekest, most irresolute or changeable. Our current morality is more truthfully a kind of bizarrely amorphous yet strangely militant non-judgementalism, which is of course much like Modernism itself, really nothing at all — just a 'tear-down' stage of a previously strong ideology. Contemporary artists tend to spend much of their time mocking and provoking Christians, treating our dissipating religion with anger and contempt. This is favourite pastime of the regressive left and disrespect for native belief systems are generally an indication of an egalitarian enterprise.

Some of the few aspects of Christianity which have passed into our new worldview are equality and passivity values. These new post-Christians have a rigid system of being morally ambiguous in every way (apart from cheek-turning and equality, for which they become positively puritan). The unquestioning belief in innate, magical equality is probably the highest virtue of the new faith. These new, daytime TV-friendly moralities are no longer enforced by superstition or doctrine (though certainly indoctrination) but by a false education system, a determinedly egalitarian media propaganda machine facilitated by the illusionary free market, and by typically feminist social coercion (shaming, social ostracizing, bullying,

etc). Anything that sounds like it attacks the equality-myth will illicit a hysterically emotional response – even violence.

Similar to how only select values carried from Christianity to progressivism, at one time only certain of the older religious ideas passed to the Christian tradition from our native paganism. Those ancient ideals, misunderstood as purely superstition, are now largely abandoned altogether, or adapted by mercantile morality into something that can be understood in a purely materialist sense — like the crass commercialization of Christmas. Pagan art and Christian art retained many core motifs, though they were also radically different and each equally fertile and varied. And so we can say there has been a slow transformation of traditional belief and philosophy in three stages, the first two being a sort of continuation, arguably altered with the Reformation, with the third being an imposed dead-end.

Paganism (in variation) → Christianity → Modernism.

This final stage (Modernism) is still in the process of completely abandoning all deep tradition for the few facile remnants of Christianity it still has use for. As stated already, these are namely those ethics based around equality, universalism and forgiveness, which is anti-self and only sustainable in times of plenty. If we don't find a new belief system, based on deeper traditional values, it seems likely a new one will be forced on us in the form of Islam, which seems somewhat impervious to what is called Postmodernist belief. Unless things change, we face a grim choice between Islam and anarcho-communism as our two most likely future belief systems, with the latter leading directly into the former, and in both options our historic art, literature and music meets the bonfire.

To try to focus on the true purpose of religion, Postmodern belief (post-Christian equality-belief) should be understood as completely different from the virtues that were originally expounded with the conversion from paganism to Christianity. When Europe became Christian, certain values that existed already but were of lesser importance gained new prominence, virtues that had a strong unifying ascetic that Europeanized what was not a regional religion. Ideas such as piety, humility and charity came into focus.

A new dynamic emerged with the devotion and fundamentalism of the new monotheism, with the stark division of the world into two clear paths: to heaven or hell. Gothic art of this period usually exudes this duality, the constant threat of evil on one side and angelic purity on the other. Gothic architecture in particular exudes this feeling of drama, it being a style we do not know the specific origins of while also being the very height of human architectural achievement. While the written tradition or vocabulary of the core classical Roman orders had been somewhat lost at that time, their root principles were still instinctively obeyed in this new Gothic style. The flying buttress, the pointed arch, the ribbed vault were all new and exciting developments of the new spiritual expression.

The early Gothic Christianity was merged with surviving pagan beliefs, such as proving worth through sacred combat, respect for hierarchy and death before dishonour. This organically occurring spiritual grafting spawned an Arthurian age of chivalric vigour — culminating in a strong and creative Feudal Age. Medieval chivalry existed according to an honour code system based on humility and asceticism, a code granting us many of our still existing noble concepts of gentility and integrity. Proud knights of this early Ghibelline period lived to test themselves by a set of laws that existed as an anti-materialist inner life, as a measure of personal greatness. There were Christianized adaptations of folkloric heroes like Beowulf, as well as legendary monsters, wizards, witches, giants, elves, dragons. These elements, originating in older legend, nourished this muscular early Christianity, which was not so focused on pacifism and turning the other cheek but perfectly happy to fight and die for honour, the faith and dominion. The unique art of this period, which we mistakenly call the Dark Ages (through to the late Middle Ages), was a return to a primitivism, possibly in part due to the Semetic anti-representational aspect of the old testament, which would recur again in the Reformation. This unique art is exemplified in Dark Age motifs and designs, in monks rendering highly detailed lettering, in tapestries and gargoyles. The medieval Christians preferred bright, primary colours and while some Roman-era art techniques were lost until the Renaissance, the medieval aesthetic remained undeniably European. Eventually, medieval philosophers grafted pre-Christian Platonism on to the intriguing starkness of the Gothic Christianity and this too came to be expressed in art, as the merging of monotheism with

Platonic idealism gradually created new artistic and philosophical ideas. The Renaissance was largely fuelled by a rediscovery of pagan texts and philosophies forgotten by the masses but kept alive by Christian monks. These works of Plutarch, Herodotus, Aristotle and many others seemed for a time to only strengthen and juxtapose this Christian society and influence the art styles towards a beautiful but sadly short-lived Renaissance of hybrid Gothic-Neoclassicism.

The Hohenstauffen dynasty and the early popes and emperors had tumultuous struggles in the name of preserving 'sacred regality'. They often acted as though they believed God wished them to commit outrageous acts, to be themselves to the extreme. Again, this early Christianity was less the simpering equality morality we see today and more akin to a warlike continuation of Indo-Aryan mannerbund. The popes themselves were for many centuries much closer to fierce, marauding warlords than the soft-spoken public speakers we generally see today. But now that muscular Christianity is fading away. What is left (certainly institutionally) is trite egalitarianism, pacifism and the arrogant sense of supersedence over nature. Modernist churches designed and built today are no longer Gothic masterpieces but the same obtuse carbuncles as are typically built for civic structures or tourism centers: the vitality is missing, the unity has dissipated. The strong compassion element of our dwindling faith has been warped into endless sentimentalism. The only virtues we can express socially or in our controlled corporate work environs are tolerance and forgiveness. These are the tenets of what Nietzsche would have called a slave morality and this same slavish constraint is what keeps us from making meaningful art.

Darwin and Nietzsche may have successfully dispelled much of what could be called superstition but it is widely accepted that to embrace traditionalism is to accept a religious attitude to the divine mystery. A culture of transcendence and community cohesion demands it. One positive aspect of our age is its somewhat hyper-rationalism, which requires a practical metaphysic that worships the mysteries with reason and philosophy but not scientism. Full knowledge of our religious history and the practical, healthy reasons for worship and idealism (beyond

contemplating the mysteries) must become part of the new canon. The impulse to create art is rooted in the non-materialistic.

2) Pre-Christian faiths.

*I know that I hung on a windy tree
nine long nights,
wounded with a spear, dedicated to Odin,
myself to myself,
on that tree of which no man knows
from where its roots run.*

– *Hávamál, Poetic Edda, where Odin sacrifices himself, to himself, by hanging on a tree.*

There are many interesting comparisons between paganism and Christianity, in terms of reflecting what is best in each. Most interestingly, older pagan belief saw the gods as bound within the confines of nature, not outside, above or encompassing nature, as Christianity teaches. The gods were certainly divine beings but there was a further, unknown tier of mystery within which they were confined with the rest of us, meaning they were not wholly omnipotent. Zeus and Odin did not know the outcome of all battles or the fate of all Gods and humans. Zeus had to consult the fates to know the outcome of the Trojan war and is not above nature (all-knowing). Above Zeus there is the world-soul and between them, possibly unknown hypercosmic gods (according to Iamblichus). The gods could even be challenged by other giants and Titans. Zeus himself took control of the universe from Chronos, who wrested it from Ouranus. Odin, Thor and many other Norse gods actually die (most unusually) at the foretold end-battle of Ragnarok. The Gods are representational of the seasons and human passions, bound in mythos but feared and respected out of what can only be described as a sophisticated understanding of selfhood and the necessity of cycles. Art was supernaturally entwined with this wisdom and the rules of art orders were delineated as components of religion. This defensive, preserving knowledge was hidden and maintained within ritual, descending from our even older and more mysterious Indo-Aryan (what I romantically call Hyperborean) progenitor ancestors, who inspired all of the world's

major faiths. Religious and mythic themes are themselves spiritual high art, which becomes implied cohesively in craft and handmade common objects.

The gods-as-within-nature view is quite alien to our Christian religious conception of an all-powerful figure who knows all and for whom all things play out as designed – and only once. However, this idea of the omnipotent God is alluded to in pagan literature as pure soul (all-soul, the Whole) or pure reason, unconcerned with lesser gods and beyond the understanding of ego. Plato and Plotinus expounded upon this in much detail, the rational and reverent study of which should be reinvigorated in place of the narrow, Dawkins-esque¹⁵ nihilism of scientism, which is another feeder route to anarchy and egalitarianism.

The other interesting and artistically influential aspect of paganism that is difficult for modern understanding is the licence it gave to eccentricity. While the gods ultimately controlled human affairs, there were less restraints on the naked pursuit of personal interest and power. This was occasionally by pacifist or intellectual means, like the pursuit of goodness in philosophy, but more often by wits and violence — making true pagans almost the polar opposite of many of our effete equality-loving neopagans today. The individual had more free choice because nothing had that sense of Christian certainty. Even their concept of the afterlife included more adventure, risk taking, battles and yet more extremes of glory or torment. In reading pagan thought and experience, there seems to be less of a feeling of an omnipotent safety net, yet almost paradoxically a more intense sense of civic duty.

*Hestia's fire in every flat, rekindled, burned before
The Lardergods. Unmarried daughters with obedient hands
Tended it By the hearth the white-armed venerable mother
Domum servabat, lanam faciebat. at the hour
Of sacrifice their brothers came, silent, corrected, grave
Before their elders; on their downy cheeks easily the blush
Arose (it is the mark of freemen's children) as they trooped,
Gleaming with oil, demurely home from the palaestra or the dance.
Walk carefully, do not wake the envy of the happy gods,
Shun Hubris. The middle of the road, the middle sort of men,*

*Are best. Aidos surpasses gold. Reverence for the aged
Is wholesome as seasonable rain, and for a man to die
Defending the city in battle is a harmonious thing.*
– C.S. Lewis

This more expansive hyper-personality in our pagan and early Christian ancestors (which makes a mockery of our bovine modern faux-individualism) ensured individuals were more capable of following outrageous passions and pure unrestricted opinion in thought and action. They did this to perhaps greater extremes of good and evil than we are accustomed to, in artistic passions exemplified in their few surviving remnants: chiefly literature, statuary and architecture. But the possibilities of action, or even of what is good, were more interpretive, while showing respect and observing custom was sacrosanct. It can only be described by the axiom ‘tradition’ because we cannot fully understand their motivations, given all the lost knowledge and gaps in our understanding due to the lapse of time. And yet their myths, artistic accomplishments and accounts of their actions still resonate with us and shine a light on our current impoverishment. Their art was varied and in all ways excellent. There came not unto them any desire or excuse to revere splatter paintings and abstract ‘installations’. And we must remind ourselves again that the most esteemed of their art vocations was, bardic storytelling, the poet who sang and recited the exploits of cultural heroes.

Part of Christianity’s success over paganism was its openness to everyone irrespective of race, tradition and caste – a disaster for Roman order and hierarchy. By positing faith alone as the only route to salvation, over heroism and spiritual ascension, Christianity appealed to the plebeian classes with promises of life beyond death above Roman values of duty and sacred hierarchy. While this was not an improved situation, Christianity also provided certain moral advancements, such as sexual restraint, patience and a greater focus on the idea of ascetic religious sacrifice as an inward self-sacrifice. All these pagan and early Christian philosophies have their representational art styles and all are beautiful in different ways, including in their admixture, and none have anything resembling the degenerative beliefs of Greenberg’s Modernism.

“What is divine is full of Providence. Even chance is not divorced from nature, from the inweaving and enfolding of things governed by Providence. Everything proceeds from it.”

– Marcus Aurelius

3) Classical philosophy & NeoPlatonism.

“I read Proclus for my opium; it excites my imagination to let sail before me the pleasing and grand figures of gods and daemons and demoniacal men. I hear of rumors rife among the most ancient gods, of azonic gods who are itinerants, of daemons with fulgid eyes, of the unenvying and exuberant will of the gods ; the aquatic gods, the Plain of Truth, the meadow, the nutriment of the gods, the paternal port, and all the rest of the Platonic rhetoric quoted as household words. By all these and so many rare and brave words I am filled with hilarity and spring, my heart dances, my sight is quickened, I behold shining relations between all beings, and am impelled to write and almost to sing. I think one would grow handsome who read Proclus much and well.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Greek pagan myth has the most surviving literature, as well as being, among all the early cultures, the one that most predicates the art that we call Western. Hellenism has a fundamental set of religious principles. However, its structure, like that of similar religions, has an unusual and indefinable pattern compared with the worldview we are accustomed to. Its roots lie in the Orphic or Dionysian Mysteries, which form a tree out of which sprout the lessons of Pythagoras and sacred mysticism concerning Harmony, as the prime principle of the Cosmos.

The Orphic and Pythagorean are different yet harmonically bound in Platonic theology, which layers and relates complexity.

Epicureanism (founded in 307BC) and Stoicism (founded in the early third century BC) were both prominent Hellenic philosophies. Epicurius' view was that there were Gods but they lived in a perfect state of ataraxia or indifference, unconcerned with evil in the world or the affairs of men. And so Epicureans believed that men should strive to share a similar detachment. They believed Gods, matter, souls and even thoughts are made

up of atoms and the Gods inhabited metakosmia: empty spaces between worlds in the vastness of infinite space. Epicureanism resembles Buddhism in its temperateness, lack of divine interference and its atomism, as well as its belief in constraint or moderation.

Stoics had no definitive belief in an afterlife but conceived of themselves as being members of a divine being. The living universe was thought to have an eternal cycle of change and eventually this universe would evolve into a penultimate period, when everything is converted to the divine fire, becoming soul only. This fire in turn becomes a kind of fertile mass, from which the seeds of reason sow a new universal cycle. Stoics were champions of the idea of ignoring heedless passions and fears for full acceptance of the here and now.

Neoplatonism was the surviving 'living' philosophy of Hellenism that was integrated with Christianity. One can be a Neoplatonist pagan or Christian, and indeed the Europeanization of Christianity is thought of to be in large part its anchoring to Platonic thought. To Neoplatonists, what is eternal in us is reason and we get closer to this eternity (the Whole) the less attention is paid to pleasure or pain, and the more we engage in philosophical contemplation. The goal of human life is to seek spiritual ascension with an aim to reconnecting with the Whole, or first divinity, the totality of all beings. Plato and Plotinus identified the 'Whole' (the One) with the concept of 'Good' and the principle of 'Beauty', that contained no division, multiplicity or distinction. Neoplatonism is related also to Gnosticism and Hermeticism, though it is more rational and all its precepts based in reason and philosophy.

In Plato and the legends of the netherworld and the Socratic story of Er can be seen the ancient precursors to our concepts of Heaven and Hell (similarly the Norse Hel of the Eddas from whence the word comes), the judgement and punishment concept harkening back to the Egyptian rituals of the dead. The difference is that in Er's case, there was the addition of an ancient Aryan reincarnation element similar to the Hindu tradition. To Socrates and others, only the philosophical virtue could guide a soul through the cycles and stages of life and afterlife wisely. Reason and truth are the ultimate virtues.

“You are everywhere at once, in the earth, in the sea, in heaven. You are not yet born, you are in the womb, you are old, a youth, dead, in an afterlife. Realise all of these things simultaneously, all times, places, things, qualities, and you can realise God.”

– *Plotinus, 270 BC.*

We will not regain our culture or art or strength of any sort until we earnestly undergo a religious revival, to reclaim a *metaphysical view*, even a rational one, as the kernel of creativity. I personally feel the study of Platonism/Neoplatonism is a worthy starting point, with its historical syncretism, rational discourse, and healthy primordial traditionalism. The truth behind the curtain of our lives is something far more vast, strange and cryptic than can be outlined in any doctrine, as can be psychedelically triggered by the archaic shamanism of the Eleusinian Mysteries. From there, initiates commune with God by following instinct.

“What a strange, strange world it must be if there are alternative continua operating all around us filled with strange alien information that is the product of its own history and has an appetite for its own future.”

– *Terrence McKenna*

Neoplatonism strongly influenced Christian theology throughout Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. This was largely thanks to Christian writers *St Augustine of Hippo* (354-430AD) and *Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite* (late fifth and early sixth centuries AD), who were influenced by Plotinus (204-270AD) and Porphyry (233-305AD). By bridging the gulf between major Western religions, Neoplatonism validates eternal principles that we express through ritual. It also means that the tenets of Platonic thinking are already grounded within our dormant Christian morality today. As a rational belief, Neoplatonism defines a direct influence on material human realities (such as visual art, music and architecture) via its veneration of the aforementioned Golden Ratio, which it teaches as fundamental to both art and nature. And this belief is undeniably true and tangibly experienced by everyone who has ever appreciated high art. The ratio cannot be repeated or referenced often enough.

4) The Golden Ratio.

As we have stated, these Platonic principles are the foundations of art as expressions of natural beauty and goodness. They can be measured in experienced reality, as we see the bliss of ultimate reason manifest through mathematics and geometry. And from understanding and application of those concepts, the divine intellect becomes represented in the creative works of an artist. This geometry, this equation, is the dominant magic element in all pre-Modernist Western art, both pagan and Christian. The divine mathematical formula we know as the Golden Ratio must be stressed constantly as the vital underpinning of all artistic activity, from music to city planning. Even the layout of this book follows its calculations.

Here, we see art and mathematics intertwined; a quotient that has ethereal significance. We see the lost rationality of art, art as an objective trade or study, spiritual (but not contrived). It is creative and orderly, and reasonable, the polar opposite of our current worship of false ‘freedoms’. Reason, truth and beauty are religious and material truths. Striving upward, testing yourself against the measure of nature, is the goal and journey of a soul. And this is real, undeniable, to everyone. The spiritual dimension is entwined with the creation of real art, in seeking perfection inspired by the divine intellect found in each of us.

“For whenever in any three numbers, whether cube or square, there is a mean, which is to the last term what the first term is to it; and again, when the mean is to the first term as the last term is to the mean—then the mean becoming first and last, and the first and last both becoming means, they will all of them of necessity come to be the same, and having become the same with one another will be all one.”

– Plato, *Timaeus*

5) Material spirituality, theosophy and initiation.

“The sun is God.”

– *Dying words of J.M.W. Turner*

We should include here a mention of beliefs from the traditions with the deepest art-related values: nature worship, initiation (which we will later relate to guilds) and wyrd (destiny). There are other engaging and very corporal religious archetypes in nature that, while materially real and

worthy of adulation, are no longer considered in the devotional way they should be. Like an initiate who has had a veil removed from his eyes, things we have known all our lives can take on a new light by altering the way we view them. To see and to paint the sunset or a woodland scene at a master level is to pay devotion to it both internally and before the world. Christianity, while diverting focus to man as above nature, still in many ways retained a reverence for nature and creation. Post-Christianity largely does not — everything becomes secondary to economy and comfort.

An easy example of a routine natural phenomenon worthy of numinous praise is the sun: Ra (Egypt), Apollo (Greece), Lugh (Ireland), Sól or Freyr (Norse). The sun is a tangible superforce that appears every morning, clearly visible — and which also happens to be a miraculous self-sustaining thermonuclear explosion hovering in the æther. It has been worshipped before and if you stop to consider it, how can we not have reverence for such a miracle? Or view it macrocosmically, as something superior to us that we are absolutely reliant upon? The more you remove the veil of our spiritless materialism, the more you see that revelations worthy of exultation are around us constantly, and not just in permanent sky-explosions but in old trees and lichen-covered rocks, individual things that are part of the greater whole. Opening your eyes to the world anew brings greater awareness to two issues: that we have developed a dangerous, indifferent arrogance towards nature and that we have lost an art that once emulated, respected and complimented nature's miracles.

Old trees were for a long time considered sacred, and rightly so. There are few things more dignified and awe inspiring than an ancient tree — silent, knotted, consecrated nature. Trees have often been seen as symbols of knowledge and immortality, as well as growth, death and rebirth. The Celtic druids venerated trees as well as rocks, streams and mountains, all of which often contained residing spirits. These would have been local deities, known and respected by inhabitants living near to the shrine itself. Many heroes in Homer's Iliad were descended from river gods, powerful spirits who even the Olympians were reticent to cross. These are natural objects, deserving of respect, as they are inexplicably numinous: a landscape, the ocean, the constellations. There is undeniably a great mystery at work here

and it is not unseen. Nature has always been the intrinsic devotional centre from whence poetry and all art emanates.

Primordial tradition is the practice of a *prisca theologia*, or theosophy, which is theories of wisdom or knowledge of God. There were many European sacred initiation religions, many different routes to spirituality, which also never fully disappeared but continued to exert subtle influence, sometimes directly upon culture through artistic impulse, or through esoteric traditions as mystery wisdom. Though we are unaware when we express their theories, their influence has never quite vanished. A prime example of such is the Mithraic cult, once a religion in competition with Christianity and very popular in the Roman army. The iconic scenes of Mithras (an original Indo-Aryan god Mitra) in their remaining monuments show him being born from a rock, slaughtering a bull and sharing a banquet with the god Sol (the Sun). These artefacts are often discovered in relief and sculpture at sites across Europe.

To the Mithraics, there were seven stages of initiation, representing the seven Hierarchies of Creative Powers. These stages were connected with the Seven Sacred Planets, which are Venus, Mercury, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and two others, which are exoterically said to be the Sun and the Moon. The initiate's goal was to ascend these spheres. Beyond the seventh sphere was a dimension of 'the Father', which was an endless ocean of calm enlightenment. Further beyond that lay the apex dimension: the Eagle, the maelstrom world of powers. This was similar to the plane of 'pure fire' or 'pure soul' believed in by the stoics, or Plato's plane of pure reason, or the Christian concept of Heaven.

These beliefs were once cross-fertilising and nebulous, and each had an associative art, as we can see with the Mosaic of Christ as Sol Invictus or Apollo-Helios in from the pre-fourth-century Necropolis, now in St Peter's in the Vatican, which has been interpreted as a syncretic image representing Christ. Many Hermeticists see Jesus as a practitioner who achieved the highest level of alchemical transformation, gaining godhood (*rubedo*, the reddening) and immortality. And that God himself is the greatest alchemist of all time, with every star in the universe as his alchemical forge.

6) Sacred hierarchy.

In terms of human society, the rules governing us are not wholly motivated by materialist ‘reality’, although this is an easy illusion to be ensnared by. Impulse and direction can only be the product of belief, being a spiritual and cultural brotherhood bounded by religious morality. As anyone who is widely travelled knows, many moral staples are quite malleable and differ wildly from place to place rather shockingly. Many religious morals are evolutionarily adapted to suit the racial expression of the disciples but even within our own peoples there have been some fairly seismic religious changes. Yet there are a few eternal values the various major Indo-Aryan-descended religions do share, at least in source and spirit. These are the morals and culture we feel as good and healthy, as laid out for us by our ancestors before and during early recorded history. These are an expression of their instincts, which is the core of religious belief that we must preserve — morals that are philosophised in Nordic proverbs, Celtic fables, certain biblical commandments and Hellenic discourse. These are eternal values such as: fides, nobility of blood, hierarchy, cultivation of personal honour, hospitality, courage, aesthetics, reason, truth, sacrifice and the family as cornerstone. At its core, the true religious tradition concerns philosophy and reverence for life’s wonders more than superstition and literal myth-belief. The tradition creates art that aims to capture that reverence for nature and the guardians of religion work hand-in-hand with influential artisans to form a culture.

Also inherent to traditional Indo-Aryan religions was a rigid sense of caste, even at the spiritual level and the limits of the spirit’s abilities. A man born a sculptor knew his place in the world and cosmos indelibly, and the rank of his caste was axiomatic. Caste is another concept only very recently lost (in the post-1960s Anglo-Saxon liberal culture war). The priestly class held paramount position in this hierarchy, as keepers of the tradition. They were also part of the royalty. They looked up to and answered only to the king. However, unlike in mercantile systems like ours, the king did not look back down from on high but had his back to them as he looked upwards further still, towards God and the great mystery. By this striving for the unattainable, a high material benchmark was set for cultural standards of self-improvement. Everybody strove upward, without measure or point of end. This cultural motif plays into important societal protocols

that safeguard high art such as craft guilds, which are vital to sustaining craft standards, diversity of style and non-materialistic high art.

By keeping the mysteries and the priestly warrior class at the top, the roots of authority had a metaphysical character and every manifest individual or cultural action proceeded from spiritual authority. Art flowed quite casually from the minds and hands of these men, almost unthinkingly, like breathing, and their ways were æsthetic in all disciplines. It was likely something they never imagined could be lost. Or maybe I am wrong and order-keepers understood their important charge all too well. A motivated, anti-luxury middle and upper caste with free time will create and ensure high culture and high art. We can see the result of this from our entire pre-twentieth century history. Was social stratification unequal? Perhaps but that is unavoidable in any situation, our ancestors were merely honest about it. Did they have a cultural habit of hard work, did they produce priceless high art and culture of value to all ages? Yes.

This ordered society corresponding to caste, still alive in India as living Aryan tradition, has been dismantled for now in the Western struggles with socialism. But traces remain in delineations of the abilities and habits of peasants, bourgeois, business class, nobility and clergy. The Olympian man still exists. He is, as always, a master of the inner life, in the chivalric tradition, who answers to his own inner commitment. And his will is enacted by his spiritual awareness and presence of mind, and his unstoppable patience and dismissiveness for the meaninglessness of pain, irrational passions and weakness. A self-testing ascetic concerned only with over-becoming.

*Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his gods.
— Lord Macaulay*

Our word ‘necessity’ comes from the latin necessitas, which means: The mysterious power who, more especially among the Greeks, is always described as ruling even over the gods. You can see the true meaning contains undeniable sacred mystery and philosophy, and dispels as lifeless and mechanistic our materialist modern definition.

7) Atheism & agnosticism.

For agnostics and others who cringe at talk of metaphysics, there must be acknowledgement of the benefits of social cohesion in an agreed morality, which derives from ritual and tradition. Even atheists celebrate Christmas. While our Western scientific pursuit of truth (Darwin, Kelvin, Nietzsche) has weakened Christianity and left us prone to nihilism and moral chaos, there is a slowly dawning realization among artists and philosophers that we cannot live without a metaphysic, a philosophy which observes the important root principles and keeps focus on the inner life. When we, individually or as a society, determine that human religion is not true and do away with the concept of God, it seems we cannot do so without leaving behind what is best in us. It is the tragic irony of striving for and then crossing a threshold that unexpectedly transforms us into something unrecognizable. An evolution that removes or destroys the reason you were progressing to begin with. We can see vividly in our artworks of today (all of which are failures) the loss of this spiritual element.

8) Primordial belief and the rejection of materialist Puritanism.

The direct relationship between spirituality and art is fundamental. We need to believe in ourselves to have an art. True art is laborious and requires a lot of supportive infrastructure. The regaining of the prime principles of our tradition can begin when we are done with destroying our identity in the name of an impossible equality quest.

“It is contradictory to say that the same person can be at the same time ruler and ruled. ... The great ability of those who are in control in the modern world lies in making the people believe that they are governing themselves; and the people are the more inclined to believe this as they are flattered by it, as they are in any case incapable of sufficient reflection to

see its impossibility. It was to create this illusion that 'universal suffrage' was invented: the law is supposed to be made by the opinion of the majority, but what is overlooked is that this opinion is something that can very easily be guided and modified; it is always possible, by means of suitable suggestions, to arouse in it currents moving in this or that direction as desired.

We cannot recall who it was that first spoke of 'manufacturing opinion', but this expression is very apt."

– René Guénon

But is faith really the missing element in creating true art? Inspiring art does require myth and self-belief. It also obviously withers in atheistic systems like communism, consumerism and liberal democracy. Art is vitality, or the expression of a culture's strength of vitality. Self-belief comes from hope and rationality. They are enshrined in the universe-as-God Neoplatonic philosophy that early Christian writers such as Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) believed. In that sense, true art is our worship of sacred nature.

Today, we pat our own backs continually, thinking ourselves smarter than our ancestors, scolding their stupidity for not understanding the need to worship equality, when in truth we are just a pale shadow of our ancestral betters, who must look down from on high with great pity and great disgust for our own traitorous weaklings who have turned us against their teachings. In having squandered our inheritance, we are gearing up for some very substantial problems. Can we will ourselves back to belief? Or does it need to happen organically? There are many difficult crossroads before us and to be saved we must reignite the same struggle that Frederick Barbarossa undertook, for the divine right of kings against economic rule of the soulless business class. The only way to safeguard the future, realistically, is by stricture of moral code, by imposing the spiritual struggle for striving upward, beyond the physical world and to an unattainable point. While the target may be impossible, a high-aiming bow ensures the missile lands at the highest mark. We collectively reach the near-unattainable excellence, the moral goodness that knows nothing of sloth or self-pity. And never to forget, that goodness and beauty are inseparable.

Decadence and nihilism are the enemy. This is, I believe, the core of what some traditionalists call the *solar struggle*. The path of the ascetic inner struggle should factor, by degrees, into every person's life. We might fancifully call this the Atlantean inheritance, the ancient material purpose of rules handed down from God and hidden in myth and the storytelling arts. The Golden Ratio ensures æsthetics and beauty are synonymous with the truth of this primordial philosophy. So let us accept religion, myth, tradition and ritual are a necessity, even in the absence of a literal myth-belief. Materialist and atheist freedoms are an illusion. Like art, religious tradition is not something to be derided by empiricists and discarded — it has an organic purpose beyond the obvious and the materialists will discard anything outside the control of money power. We can see all around us today the misery that results when we discard the baton as it is passed to us.

“I said what I now say once more, that the majority of the world are of opinion that there never were any knights-errant in it; and as it is my opinion that, unless heaven by some miracle brings home to them the truth that there were and are, all the pains one takes will be in vain (as experience has often proved to me), I will not now stop to disabuse you of the error you share with the multitude. All I shall do is to pray to heaven to deliver you from it, and show you how beneficial and necessary knights-errant were in days of yore, and how useful they would be in these days were they but in vogue; but now, for the sins of the people, sloth and indolence, gluttony and luxury are triumphant.”
- *Don Quixote*, Miguel de Cervantes

Hierarchical industrialization

“The myth that is trying to be born in science, and it has to be born there because that’s the dominant church, is the rebirth of the spirit.”

– Terence McKenna, Ecology of the Soul lecture

In our modern lives industry and mechanization have poisoned, softened and neutered Westerners, partially because technology has become crucial to daily survival. Not in absolutely negative ways but negative enough that we are losing things like art, wellbeing and resourcefulness, while teetering on acute ecological and demographic disaster. However, even if we are consumed in a new dark age, all machine technology is not likely to vanish. Therefore the ideal solution lies in a more limited, focused and hierarchical (*heroic*) application of technology.

Whatever the future holds (collapse or rejuvenation), a renewed respect for nature in all her harshness and beauty will be essential, and unavoidable. We cannot be nor should we want to be ever against nature or think ourselves above her. What makes an industrialized world hyper-threatening to nature is exploitation via our misguided *democratic* morality. Democracy and equality, despite supposedly being our newfound ‘core values’, are largely phantoms and falsehoods. Yet they are the fuel for the industrial machine that directs culture in the most irresponsible and wasteful directions, with disastrous results for the entire biosphere. The entirety of nature is very negatively impacted by ever-expanding human rights laws, globalist markets, plastic waste, overpopulation and other offshoots of economy and democracy worship.

What I propose we steel ourselves for, if the future is not total extinction, is the concept of *hierarchical industrialization*. To extoll the

Hellenic virtue of temperance or measure, but applied to technology, to limit and prioritise in service of only those progressions which are mature and healthy, and reject those that are fleeting, mercantile, and regressive. We cannot *un-invent* things but we can progress our utilization — we could view technology as a tool primarily for *heroic advancement* and not a means to endlessly increase convenience culture for every world citizen, making them more larval and weak with every passing year. A healthy use of high technology would be in furtherance of hard exploration and high culture: aristocratic and objective, as opposed to the usual exploiting of crass distraction and hedonism. Simply saying no to polluting smokestacks and transient junk items that exist, above all, to create middleman wealth, which then go on to glut landfills and ocean gyres, so that capitalist money-power can feed parasitically without working themselves.

There are primarily three technological inventions of the twentieth century (along with the shift in political views after the Great Wars) which fast-tracked life for Westerners towards this plebeian neutering. Firstly, nuclear weapons, which altered previous heroism-testing ground war conceptions, giving us fewer battle-hardened men and dissipated the need for certain nationalist duties. Secondly, the contraceptive pill for women, making birth control easy and paving the way for the ravages of feminism. And finally, the TV, which has kept the masses brainwashed for 70-odd years, though it is thankfully beginning to lose its grip somewhat. These technologies have been misused, or possible should not have been invented.

Space exploration, and all technology related to it, is an example of heroic endeavour that has more recently fallen by the wayside to make way for equality convenience culture. To be spacefarers requires a level of necessary industrialization and would require oil production and advanced systems. Also, probably, nuclear power for space vehicles, should we finally manage to get out into the wider Solar System. I believe that despite the lessons of tradition about seeking inwardly (rejecting the obstinate outside world) setting and achieving the impossible goal is our true outward purpose. Inner struggle *and* outer struggle. True progress for us is adventure and risk. Dangerous, nearly impossible tasks keep us thriving. Let the explorers burn their dangerous fuel systems out in the void, in the name of exploration, and keep mother Earth a protected garden.

Recent NASA activity has shifted towards getting *diversity* into space, while failing to send up anything but a few robots out of an effete fear of actually risking lives, despite the willingness of candidates. An example of how the emasculated and unimaginative managerial class cluelessly scuppers innovation, fussing over the graphic design of internal reports, incapable of grasping idealism. Materialist values refuse to let them risk life. The result being the activity of NASA today amounts to a collective yawn. Egalitarian diversity quotas for space missions or any other project do not ensure excellence or improvement of any kind. Space science (like classical art) is now considered '*Eurocentric*' or '*sexist*' for the reason that white men have excelled at it. Of course, that is because they invented it, it is their science — just as Western art was their art. And these were inventions to the benefit of everyone, I might add. Indeed, the left is revising the history of Western scientific achievement as we speak, with non-Europeans finding exaggerated roles in fabricated historical stories wherever possible. If left unchecked, this will lead to the inevitable unravelling of not just the present and the future but everything that ever happened.

We know from the past that better systems are possible. We had natural systems and sacred hierarchy for much longer than we have had capitalism and communism. To see archaic politics revived, with the addition of our modern technology, would be an interesting twist. As many libertarians concede, Monarchical systems were more economically sound than democratic ones, resulting in less debt and more responsibility. The ruling families used to *represent* and take responsibility for the nations, while politicians now come and go with ease and represent only themselves. In an archaic hierarchically developed system, the wasteful commercial use of resources would be limited. The visceral, unhealthy cruelty and land wastage of capitalist factory farming could be curtailed. Technology need not be discarded if we discard Modernism and democracy. But we must recognize that not all *new* things are *good*, or well considered, and exercise discrimination upon fleeting trends that are foisted on us by our hidden oligarchs.

Middleman exploitation in all of our systems should be addressed as a fundamental evil. Via the managerial class bureaucracy, they control

technology as a supra-force to further their control and spread anti-heroic mercantile culture: brainwashing, coddling, selling. As *Ezra Pound* said:

“Until you know who has lent what to whom, you know nothing whatever of politics, you know nothing whatever of history, you know nothing of international wrangles. The usury system does no nation . . . any good whatsoever. It is an internal peril to him who hath, and it can make no use of nations in the play of international diplomacy save to breed strife between them and use the worst as flails against the best. It is the usurer’s game to hurl the savage against the civilized opponent. The game is not pretty, it is not a very safe game. It does no one any credit.”

Centralized world banking and aggrandized free trade are high water marks of mercantile goals. All these middleman exploits benefit from democratized industrialization.

Any system we have in place that can be proven to be parasitic or commercial before healthy (culturally or environmentally) and without merit in the heroic sense should be discarded. Our twentieth and twenty-first century culture has the strange inability to rid itself of bad ideas, no matter how destructive. They linger and fester and erode in the vacuous spaces of faux-individualism. Despite supposedly worshiping science, modern man seems to only support the science of the latest cell phone app, or the pseudo-science of gender theory, and other politically motivated inanities and frauds.

The world will not survive modern living. Plastic pollution is now found to be poisoning life at the deepest levels of the ocean. We must also face up to deforestation, loss of wildlife, factory farming, over-fishing, toxic dumping and nuclear accidents. Oil production and use must be limited to specific, advancing tasks and not in a social free-for-all of ‘convenience’ that is beyond the Earth’s capacity to sustain. Part of our current failure to break away rests in the reliance on the technology of cars, essentially technologically unchanged in a century, as well as the infrastructure based around cars (roads, petrol stations) keeping us locked in a *car-culture* stasis. The contrived cycle of car manufacture and use is also completely reliant on geopolitical situations and ruts that are disadvantageous and anti-culture (mass production, free trade). The urbanites will never toil to produce their

own food, until by necessity. Everything scares them, everything offends them. A rejuvenated philosophy of nature might force them to restore Victorian-era deep ecology (green technology), restore organic food production, and restore art and architecture.

Permaculture is the ideal means of food production, and the cultural shift required to accomplish that concept in a localized fashion would impact our daily lives with a humbling respect for nature. We should be encouraging the local, the homegrown, the individualism of a community, the parochial arts, spiritualism and local pride. You must return to the soil what you take from it.

We once structured society not to facilitate equality but to engineer the furtherance and nourishment of a certain type of man – a fierce and capable man, a Renaissance man, one who has the correct capabilities for his time, a man of action. Such men are not concerned with the ease of a thing or with mass-producing machines to increase luxury. Their goals lie in the destiny of glory and the limits of human achievement. Equality-world does not respect achievement, unless it is the hackneyed virtue-signalling of worshiping as heroic the half-wit who has discovered how to tie his shoelace.

In this theoretical world of hierarchical mechanization, technology would continue to evolve but not democratically. Open hierarchy systems are superior due to transparent leadership and they would help ensure technology does not get squandered on those without the idealism to know when their personal exploitation has reached its limits. It ensures the business and merchant class cannot wrest control of everything and take the soul out of our existence. In renouncing convenience values and economy-worship, we can regain not only high art and culture but that vision of an optimistic future of exploration that was nearly true, before it was squandered when the Baby Boomer generation came of age. Expansion and a solar empire should be our goal and *quality over quantity* our motto, from now to the grave.

All further industrialization must be ranked and prioritized, and we must accept the superiority of doing certain tasks by hand (art, craft, farming, textiles). The actual workings of such a system are secondary to the result.

Nothing surpasses the irreplaceable excellence of the handcrafted over the products of the assembly line. Art and material necessities, once intertwined, are not satisfied by the machine age. Quality over quantity is the human touch, it is the opposite of mass-production and homogenization. The pyramids and the Parthenon were built by hand. The already crumbling fruits of industrialization do not have the same eternal resonance and certainly no spiritual significance. The fact that the pyramids may have used slave labour is immaterial. Better to have outright slavery than pretending you are free when you are patently not. Capitalist wage slavery is very far from the freedom it masquerades as. To have everything made by hand requires a system in which human labour is valued and not a thing to be avoided. We laugh today at the life of serfs, who in every important sense (a secure future, family, homeland) had better, more meaningful lives than our increasingly depressed and long-working cubicle zombies. And slavery itself? This now ultimate taboo, do we think we have discarded it? More emotional hand-wringing. Slaves were the unfortunate, not the inferior. You could have been a slave to a wealthy man in Rome and lived much better than a free poor person. The most important aspect for a worker is that the endeavour is something he can take pride in, which ideally reaches for the eternal. If he can achieve this as action, and even get well paid for it, then so be it, that is destined by the limits of his own ability, as ordained by *wyrd*.

In a distributed hierarchy that limited mechanization (for hard science and exploration pursuits), handcrafting would regain a pre-eminence and beautify our daily lives. Capitalist profiteering would likely be adequately restrained by simple economic barriers to monopoly and media control.



Werner Von Braun with the F-1 engines of the Saturn V first stage rocket he invented, which took men to the moon, at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center.

But evil starts with a rejection of nature. A tree is still a tree, it was a tree 10,000 years ago. It is as beautiful now as it was then, though we may try to pretend we have new beauty values. But the truth of its beauty, then and now, which we all sense, means beauty is an eternal and objective principle. We may think we are advancing beyond the past but we are the same material animal we were a thousand years ago. Technology will not take us beyond the bounds of our flesh — it is not a new God, and we have put too much faith in it already. It is merely a useful tool, a valuable animal we must recapture and corral back to our stable of tradition, as opposed to changing our morality to match the whims of technology. Progress as a word has been redefined to mean equality-progress, much as art was redefined by Modernist art criticism. That kind of progress is false and impossible, as we can see it is the opposite of progress. What is true in the past and the future is the heroic *overbecoming*. To view the future as overcoming incredible odds for total exploration, total confidence and total courage. The culture of the French Revolution, the equality-progress, will not sustain a future. If we envision a future that is apart from nature, we will again lose ourselves. Technology is not an end to itself. If we keep a focus on advancing technology, while rolling back mass industrialization to a

point, and learn to be tough again, learn to tame horses, to be cold in the winter again, then men will return.

The true Promethean discipline is a grail quest, an unending search for the best way forward. It is a striving to make ideas real. If we look with brutal honesty at the state of civilization, at what works and what worked or failed historically, we can see a patchwork of methods from either end of the political spectrum that could be revived and perfected. Overabundance (in the West), and the warring of various political ideas defined the last half of the twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries are defined by a pall of stagnating ruts. From everything that has happened or been tried, and can be examined in hindsight, we should be able to pick with impunity which ideas to sow again in fertile ground. To fail to cherry-pick from the past is dysgenic. The rejuvenation of localized craft and artisans is of more value than can be measured, it is a crucial cog in the mechanism of having a culture and a people. This devolution of art indicates a cycle is ending and we must prepare for a new one. We should wish for the return of responsible leadership and a limited industrialization in the service of heroic hierarchy values, not exploitation and profit. And in the absence of an option for limited industrialization we should wish for no industrialization.

If technology does not serve heroism and risk-taking, it serves comfort, and comfort is stasis: sterility, entropy, decline. If we will not limit industry, because of an addiction to material function and a disregard to form, then the loss of art will be the least of our worries as we enter a dark millennium to rival the Ice Age.

I often imagine how it would be if the Romans or holy Emperors discovered space flight while traditionally sound and civilizationally intact. In my imagination, I visualize the æsthetic vistas of such a solar Roman empire — the technology imbued with high symbolic art, the animistic space vessels, the hardened terraforming and sculpting of planets to meet sovereign goals. The unapologetic application of technology and art towards glory, and the ascendent evolution of a spiritual science towards the furnace of God. That is a future a man can look forward to.

This marks the end of our exposition of the triumvirate of evils (Modernist theory, tolerance-culture and industrialization) that maintain and increase our monstrous modern edifice. From here we must summarize the art question in relation to this information and give examples of specific historical institutions that are necessary to ensure true art and beauty values keep their rightful scared place in society.

Form and function: The Kaiser & Barnett Newman

One of the elements that is apparently most crucial for creating contemporary art is to have a message, or have the semblance of a message, even though this can supposedly be irrationally interpreted in any way by the individual and still somehow construe the artist's message. As I recently overheard in some hubristic online dialogue: "All artists have something to say, otherwise they'd make shoes."

This attitude is at some level indicative of our irrational and mistaken modern attitudes to both art and life. In truth, art exists in and of itself, as an example of clever craft or the simple desire to depict something masterfully and for the purpose of creating beauty – inexplicable beauty. Not sentimental beauty per se but natural and emotional beauty, the tingling inspiration one discerns when one feels the immensities of work that have gone into the creation of an object, an effort to rival nature herself. But at its root, and always, there is craft. Making shoes or baking a cake are lower levels of the very same vocation, with various practical purposes beyond beauty, which also limits their creative potential slightly more. But they are cut of the same cloth as master painting.

Consider the drama of a deluge scene or a Hieronymous Bosch depiction of Hades. Beyond that point of mastery of visual technique, any message becomes irrelevant. These paintings are the cupcakes of a master baker, or the shoes of a master cobbler. It can be an expression of pure imagination and self-fulfilling for beauty reasons, striving for the plane of perfect reason. One is too awestruck to do anything but feel bliss and passionate value attributed to the art. There is no need for a musing as to its

purpose or discovering some message of social commentary (though Modernists will try).

Are functional artistic objects such as an Antonio Gaudi chair exempt as art because they are purely functional and purposefully designed for visual beauty, rather than direct symbolism? What is so intellectually stimulating about a painting with a political message that could not better be conveyed by simply writing the message in a news column? Why the strange attempt to say it visually with an abstract guessing game? That is, if the message is supposedly the ultimate purpose and not the painting?

Should not a quality painting exist in its own right, as an exemplar of unpretentious, organic values? That is not to say it cannot have symbolism and even make a kind of point, politically or otherwise, though that again is always a bit perishable. As our ancestors would have known, representing the form of beauty in nature is its own virtue, above the expressing of opinion.

The works of Raphael and Durer are perfectly breathtaking in their own right, without knowledge of any message or narrative, simply a feast for your eyes and nourishment for your soul. The same is true of a score by Telemann or Vivaldi – no backstory is required for their enjoyment, nothing need be said at all. And we are not talking of an enjoyment like a mindless sensual pleasure but an uplifting and self-improving pleasure in excellence.

The condition of life is not so abstract and abstraction in its truest sense does not exist apart from, or certainly not above, the rules of the universe, which follow an orderly, sublime mandate — inflexibly, not altruistically. What we require at this juncture is certainly not a return to Enlightenment values but a return to something more like the Renaissance. We need a morality reborn in the tempest of natural law.

A simple truth has been all but lost and that is the greatest tragedy of all.

“Art that disregards the laws and limits ... is no longer art ... whoever departs from the laws of beauty, and from the feeling for æsthetic harmony that each man senses within his breast ... is sinning against the original wellsprings of art.”

– *Kaiser Wilhelm II*

“The invention of beauty by the Greeks ... their postulate of beauty as an ideal, has been the bugbear of European art and European æsthetic philosophies.”

– *Barnett Newman*



Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Those are the words of two completely different infamous twentieth century characters, from opposite ends of the spectrum. But which of those quotes sounds vigorous and true? And which the disinterested deceit of the snake-oil salesman?

Beauty as an ideal, a bugbear indeed. Mr. Newman was born in America and not of a Christian-European background, despite claiming in this quote to know what is best for Europeans aesthetically and philosophically. He dismisses out of hand the entirety of Western tradition. He thereby does not share the ethnic-historical affinity for the art tradition he criticises, making his false presumptions all the bolder. In this sense the German Emperor, despite his other faults, is at least of the same culture he is speaking for, and an inheritor of this birthright tradition. The Kaiser is defending beauty itself, where Newman's hypocrisy is compounded because he is peddling the idea that beauty values were a bad idea from the start. *Without an ounce of humility*, Newman suggests that he knows better than superhuman cultural titans such as Plato and Phidias. He suggests that the entirety of art history before Kandinsky or Picasso was an awful, irredeemable mistake. He stands opposed to traditional art and beauty. The Kaiser, like many of us, felt spiritually and genetically connected to and responsible for the apex art of classical tradition. Newman does not share that loyalty, but merely promotes his exploitative market of goofy, monochrome 'painting'. His statement is galling for being a lie, and ultimately an attack on goodness.



Here is Mr. Newman's artwork, not at all surprising considering his contrived Artspeak opinions. Yes, that is a painting. Monochrome (red with light grey stripe in colour). Does it matter that it is reproduced here as grey instead of the original flat red - is red a de facto magic-colour representing *genius* that grey does not convey? Does that same rule apply to the other classic works published herein that make the jump to greyscale and still retain their suggestion of genius? It's not even worth the time to bother

showing the work, it's all so laughable. Obviously Newman knows what is artistically best for all of us.

There are many who stand opposed to cultural decline today who would still be staunch defenders of Modernist art. In effect, they have been immersed in art as narrative since day one, and do not understand the purity of art as craft. Partly they are worried we puritans would exclude early Modernism such as Futurism, or Impressionism, or one of those movements that was around during the transition that had some strong traditional character. These people are not ready for the purity of drawing that deciding line, of standing up and rejecting, or they have not sufficiently studied the older master work, to understand fully the environment of strict standards required for great art to flourish. The moment you let yourself step into sentimentalist *'Oh I just like everything'* thinking you are lost. Greatness requires discipline.

Everyone must come to understand we have abandoned form completely for function. We have learned the hard way that without form, artistry and its objects lose function too. This is the failure of the materialist worldview, which in our current sense is an extension of consumerist economy-worship, the hyper-destructive and artless rule of money-power.

Return to the guild system

*“Only as an æsthetic product can the world be justified to all eternity.”
- Friedrich Nietzsche*

For Friedrich Nietzsche, human art was not just a complement to nature but the highest conduct and spiritual duty of man. The realm of æsthetics held for him a supremacy over ethics and knowledge. This was a popular idea for most of history, though of course it sounds outrageous to us, the over-civilized. Art, philosophy and science were all indistinguishable facets of human activity. Or maybe we should not shy away from boldly specifying now, as we lose ground and status in the world, they were indistinguishable facets of European activity.

But for Nietzsche, art was supreme.

“Through art, Man transcends the confines of his own ego and secures oneness with the universe. Clearly, it is established: the role of art as means of self-transcendence.”

Another interesting and scandalous philosophical figure was the early twentieth century occultist, magician and poet Aleister Crowley (1875-1947). Crowley’s eccentric ideas recall the missing ingredient in our art revival, our deep-rooted longing for an absence that is now like a dream, which is our abandoned system of craft guilds.

A guild is essentially an association of artisans who control the practice of their craft. The earliest types were fraternities of tradesmen, joined by mutual interest. Not solely in the pursuit of personal material gain, as would be our modern and materialist assumption but by a duty of preserving and excelling in their craft, made sacred by an esoteric initiation ritual

combining spirituality and ancestral craft knowledge. They were inheriting a mantle, not working on a product. Guilds were organically occurring organizations and a long-standing phenomenon (ending with the merchant-class expansion in the nineteenth century). Members met in guildhalls and retained ownership of tools and supply of materials. Senior members maintained the standards within each guild. The most difficult but important aspect for us to grasp today is that artists and tradesmen were more or less synonymous at this time. In that sense, thinking of them as essentially the same vocation was a benefit to both. Dividing them as we do now into creatives and labourers (as opposed to apprentices and masters) only benefits the profiteering of the sinister merchant class. Art is craft, after all, not abstract social commentary.

“Nature’s way is to weed out the weak. This is the most merciful way, too.”

– Aleister Crowley

Politically, Crowley was a monarchist who regarded the then rising merchant money-power to total predominance as dangerous and degenerative, much like Barbarossa did 800 years earlier, proving the struggle to which we have succumbed is perennial.

Crowley felt that the duties of government should be conducted by a non-elected senate, chosen by a political monastery electoral college appointed by the king. Members would commit themselves to a vow of poverty and be selected from volunteers who had exhibited excellence as scholars, artists or even athletes. Crowley understood that the overthrow of traditional aristocracies by a business class would destroy high art and high culture — which is precisely what it has done. Nietzsche and Junger would be in agreement.

To quote Crowley further:

“At present all the strong are being damaged, and their progress being hindered by the dead weight of the weak limbs... And when the trouble begins, we aristocrats of freedom, from the castle to the cottage, the tower or the tenement, shall have the slave mob against us. We are not for the

poor and sad: the lords of the earth are our kinsfolk. Beauty and strength, leaping laughter, and delicious languor, force and fire are of us ...”

Crowley outlined a proposed guild system in these terms, which is what brought my thinking around to guilds:

“Before the face of the Areopagus stands an independent Parliament of the Guilds. Within the Order, irrespective of Grade, the members of each craft, trade, science, or profession form themselves into a Guild, making their own laws, and prosecute their own good, in all matters pertaining to their labor and means of livelihood. Each Guild chooses the man most eminent in it to represent it before the Areopagus of the Eighth Degree; and all disputes between the various Guild are argued before that Body, which will decide according to the grand principles of the Order. Its decisions pass for ratification to the Sanctuary of the Gnosis, and thence to the Throne.”

Magickal esotericism aside, the value in partitioned, autonomous, professional groups dedicated to standards of their particular craft strikes me as healthy cultural conduct. It is anti-mercantilism and promotes the *true ‘diversity’* of localized style — the parochial quaintness of artisanry that is all but lost in our global Modernist plastic sameness. This parochial individualism of regional guilds was, and would be, healthy for culture and environment. Such concerns are anathema to the business class, for whom art, culture, or ecology are all secondary concerns to money, let alone *divine right* or *nobility of the blood*. Material profit is their only pursuit and they have no allegiance to people, nations or family. Their desire is to keep people as fat, docile consumers and bland out every original or surpassing impulse they might have. They are quite far along that route as we speak.

In contemplating the history of craft guilds, it might be safe to assume, despite little recorded evidence, that there was some form of them in ancient Mesopotamia or Egypt. Among the ancient craftsmen of the Greeks, Homer names builders, carpenters, workers in leather and metal, and potters. Guilds, as we understand them, were first mentioned by Plutarch, who says ancient Rome divided the craftsmen into nine guilds (*collegia opificum*). They were: flute players, goldsmiths, coppersmiths, carpenters, fullers, dyers, potters, shoemakers and a general remaining trades guild.

You can see at once there is little to distinguish, classically, between a shoemaker and a flute player. To us, one is a largely artless, purely functional trade and the other a free-spirited, unconventional pastime that would be difficult to make a living at. But in antiquity, the flute player was considered an objective trade with an accepted standard of excellence and rules, and conversely a dyer or shoemaker was considered an artist requiring learned creative talent, virtuosity and finesse. This classical way is more respectful, garnering artistic respect and professional protections for each and every craft and industry. The guild of oil painters was as straightforward in objective standards of professionalism as carpentry, and carpentry was equal in artistry and creative flair to painting. This is why everything before Modernism and mass-production was so beautiful and so stylish regionally.

From the reign of the Emperor Diocletian¹⁸ onward, the imperial government tried to restrict guild membership to a hereditary caste of skilled artisans, but the increasing financial demands made upon the guilds in the waning days of the Roman Empire considerably reduced most of them by the fourth century. As far as we can definitely know, with the fall of the Western Roman Empire guilds disappeared from European society for more than six centuries. The collegia did survive in the Byzantine Empire, however, and particularly in the city of Byzantium (Constantinople).

In the early Middle Ages, most of the Roman craft organizations vanished, with the apparent exceptions of stonecutters and possibly glassmakers. Trade guilds arose to renewed prominence by the mid-thirteenth century as craftsmen united in common interest. Associations formed in medieval cities, most commonly masons, carpenters, painters, clothmakers, tanners, bakers, cobblers, apothecaries, candlemakers, textile workers, bookmakers and glassworkers – each controlling the standards and inheritance of traditional craft secrets going back, with generational evolution, into foggy antiquity. Most often, guild founders were independent master craftsmen who hired apprentices in studios, as is often ascribed to Renaissance master ateliers like those of da Vinci or Raphael. Different distinct fraternities existed within each guild. For instance, within a guild of metalworkers you might find the farriers, knifemakers,

locksmiths, chain-forgers, nailmakers, etc. Armourers were divided into makers of helmets, escutcheons, harnesses, etc.

It is important to keep in mind the historic religious and initiation element to the guilds. Though this seems kooky and outdated today, the relevance of a transcendent or anti-materialist element in a fraternity of professionals should never be overlooked or belittled. Their somewhat non-linear time preference saw man's place in the world not as a point A to B flow but a limitless pool of possibilities bound by fate, an interconnected web of religious significance, relating ancestors and descendents.

Before a new employee could rise to the level of mastery, he had to go through a training period as an apprentice. After this, he could rise to the level of journeyman. Apprentice, journeyman, and master are words and concepts that exist to this day for our remaining utilitarian trades. Apprentices would only be taught the most basic techniques until deemed trustworthy enough to keep the guild's secrets. Remember that this is just the same for the flute player and painter as for the carpenter and dyer.

When apprentices reached the level of journeymen (after several years and a qualifying piece of work) they were able to travel to other cities and countries to work for other masters. These journeys could span large parts of Europe and were a clever way to gain knowledge of new techniques developing in other guilds. Often, journeymen from small cities would visit the capital. The next and final stage, after several more years, would be graduation to master craftsman status. This would require the approval of all masters of a guild and, once again, the production of a masterpiece work, which the guild would often keep. Art lovers venerate examples of such work as quasi-divine to this day. In that sense, the proof is in the pudding and we can see how this rational professional process delivers the truly transcendent art that abstract Modernism promises but fails to.

The unique excellence of certain guilds in different towns of their signature craft, such as wine from Bordeaux, earthenwares from Holland, lace from Chantilly, led to what we know as trademarks.

While the earlier Middle Ages, broadly speaking, divided society into three categories (those who fight, those who pray and those who work), the resurgence of Roman-era craft guilds during the later Middle Ages was a crucial stage in the ascension of European art. The power of the artists during this period was not based on their individual capacities so much as their willingness to join together and act as a loyal collective, a sacred fraternity.

The importance of the craft guild system historically remains with us in the ghosts of place names. Since the later twelfth century, there had been an active book industry in Paris, beginning originally in the streets adjacent to Notre Dame Cathedral. The manuscript industry grew around the church of Saint Severin, where parchment was sold, resulting in the street name (Rue de la Parcheminerie). In older times, this street was also called the Rue aus Escrivains, which translates to the street of the scribes. The street intersecting the Rue de la Parcheminerie was called the Rue des Enlumineurs, or the street of the illuminators. Workshops were often family-owned and frequently part of the home.

Cennino Cennini (born about 1370, near Florence) wrote *The Craftsman's Handbook*, which mentions some of the practices of a painter's guild studio. Cennini was a direct artistic descendent of Giotto via the guild system, across four generations, and the inheritor of the fourteenth century Italian art workshop traditions. Here is an excerpt from the text:

“Here begins the craftsman's handbook, made and composed by Cennino Cennini of Colle, in the reverence of God, and of the Virgin Mary, and of Saint Eustace, and of Saint Francis, and of Saint John the Baptist, and of Saint Anthony of Padua, and, in general of all the Saints of God; and in the reverence of Giotto, of Taddeo, and of Agnolo, Cennino's master; and for the use and good profit of anyone who wants to enter this profession.

“Offering to these theories whatever little understanding God has granted me, as an unimportant practicing member of the profession of painting: I, Cennino, the son of Andrea Cennini of Colle di Val d'Elsa, — [I was trained in this profession for twelve years by my master, Agnolo di Taddeo of Florence; he learned this profession from Taddeo, his father; and his father was christened under Giotto, and was his follower for four-and-

twenty years; and that Giotto changed the profession of painting from Greek back into Latin, and brought it up to date; and he had more finished craftsmanship than anyone has had since], — to minister to all those who wish to enter the profession, I will make note of what was taught me by the aforesaid Agnolo, my master; and of what I have tried out with my own hand:

“It is not without the impulse of a lofty spirit that some are moved to enter this profession, attractive to them through natural enthusiasm. Their intellect will take delight in drawing, provided their nature attracts them to it of themselves, without any master’s guidance, out of loftiness of spirit. And then, through this delight, they come to want to find a master; and they bind themselves to him with respect for authority, undergoing an apprenticeship in order to achieve perfection in all this. There are those who pursue it, because of poverty and domestic need, for profit and enthusiasm for the profession too; but above all these are to be extolled the ones who enter the profession through a sense of enthusiasm and exaltation.

“You, therefore, who with lofty spirit are fired with this ambition, and are about to enter the profession, begin by decking yourselves with this attire: Enthusiasm, Reverence, Obedience, and Constancy. And begin to submit yourself to the direction of a master of instruction as early as you can; and do not leave the master until you have to.

“The basis of the profession, the very beginning of all these manual operations, is drawing and painting. These two sections call for a knowledge of the following: how to work up or grind, how to apply size, to put on cloth, to gesso, to scrape the gessos and smooth them down, to model with gesso, to lay bole, to gild, to burnish; to temper, to lay in: to pounce, to scrape through, to stamp or punch; to mark out, to paint, to embellish, and to varnish, on panel or ancona. To work on a wall you have to wet down, to plaster, to true up, to smooth off, to draw, to paint in fresco...the next thing is to draw. You should adopt this method.

“Having first practised drawing for a while as I have taught you above, that is, on a little panel, take pains and pleasure in constantly copying the best things which you can find done by the hand of great masters. And if you are in a place where many good masters have been, so much the better

for you. But I give you this advice: take care to select the best one every time, and the one who has the greatest reputation. And, as you go on from day to day, it will be against nature if you do not get some grasp of his style and of his spirit. For if you undertake to copy after one master today and after another tomorrow, you will not acquire the style of either one or the other, and you will inevitably, through enthusiasm, become capricious, because each style will be distracting your mind. You will try to work in this man's way today, and the other's tomorrow, and so you will not get either of them right. If you follow the course of one man through constant practice, your intelligence would have to be crude indeed for you not to get some nourishment from it. Then you will find, if nature has granted you any imagination at all, that you will eventually acquire a style individual to yourself, and it cannot help being good; because your hand and your mind, being always accustomed to gather flowers, would ill know how to pluck thorns.

“Mind you, the most perfect steersman that you can have, and the best helm, lie in the triumphal gateway of copying from nature. And this outdoes all other models; and always rely on this with a stout heart, especially as you begin to gain some judgment in draughtsmanship. Do not fail, as you go on, to draw something every day, for no matter how little it is it will be well worth while, and will do you a world of good.”

So, here we have an excellent insight into the guild craft world and that feeling of permanence, of working towards an end your ancestors have prepared for you. Nothing is clouded, there is no hubris or doubt as to how to go about achieving master painting. The methods are tried and true, there is only the level of labour and innate talent. The guilds were protectors of method and standard – they were the formalized gatekeepers of culture itself. And the art they were responsible for was not stolid, drab or unimaginative, as a brainwashed Modernist would claim to defend his paintings of straight lines and installations of TV screens.

Many current historical tracts attempt to explain why guilds fell out of favour, generally with the usual trite hindsight revisionism that it was merely an inevitability of progress. They claim the guild system became a target for ‘hindering free trade’ and business development. This is

obviously the boastful interpretation of the victorious merchant class, twisting history to make the vanquished good the arbiter of their own fate, when hindering free trade means little more than hindering the parasitical middleman. No less a notoriously bloodthirsty mob than the French Revolutionaries saw guilds as a last remnant of feudalism and in 1791 abolished the guilds in France. The guilds came under attack from *Adam Smith* (1723-1790), known as the ‘father of free market economy’ — a person for whom economy and materialism were paramount. He was joined by no less than *Karl Marx*, who criticized craft guilds for ‘*rigidity of social rank*’, relating it (as usual) to oppressor and oppressed, the usual verbal manipulation. It is a badge of eternal approval to have been criticized by Marx.

“Throughout the nineteenth century the guild system was disbanded and replaced by free trade laws. By that time, many former handicraft workers had been forced to seek employment in the emerging manufacturing industries, using not closely guarded techniques but standardized methods controlled by corporations.”

This quick quote from the *Wikipedia* site’s craft guilds write-up unironically assumes corporate interest is a good thing. Industrialization and the rise of the merchant class killed off our historic and sacred guild fraternities, forcing skilled workers into the now nefarious mindless hamster-wheel of corporate slave labour and arresting a centuries-long evolution of traditional high art in the process. Guild master painters and sculptors were taken from studios to work the assembly line.

It seems clear their loss, a loss to all of us, is among the greatest tragedies of the victory of the business class and mercantile values over tradition and integrity.

For moderns to best understand the guild system, it is necessary to compare them with existing institutions. They might be described as a cross between a professional association, a trade union and an initiation cult. Of this, the esoteric initiation and religious aspect is no doubt the most alien to our ears (in what we might interpret today as a trade union). But for that reason I suspect it was probably the most crucial, in that constant war between spiritualism (metaphysics) and materialism (nihilism), which is

better described as the force of will of good men against entropy. Our hubristic failure to grasp the nature of this eternal war perhaps explains why we have lost both the guild practice and the ability to create master works. The solar spirituality that so excites traditionalists and is anathema to Modernists is currently laid low, biding its time like Cronos sleeping in his cave.

We have only lost this guild system comparatively recently, to attack from post-French Revolution business interests, for the reason that it impaired the artless transaction of business and impeded the growth of corporatism. In the age of global free trade we do not make anything ourselves at all and are so poor for it and so culturally confused we barely know who we are. These unchecked mercantile values have now eroded us to a lower and more desperate state than were the Russians after communism — and most of us do not even realise it yet.

Bringing back the guild system, which existed in an unbroken line from prehistory until recent history, would hopefully re-link us with all those masters and their inherited art knowledge, mending the timeline that was broken. There is no point in having an art guild with our current art philosophy, as anybody can literally do anything and no instruction is required. The goofier and more unskilled the better. With guilds, flute playing, painting, carpentry, plumbing, basket weaving should all be seen as the same, each with an objective tier of artistry and utility. The carpenter should know draughtsmanship and carving, the flute player the practical business of music. Simply view art and craft as one cultural expression, objective, clear and meaningful, and abandon the broken, binary view that art is obtuse abstraction and functional building has no artistic creativity.

Reviving these seemingly dead institutions may seem virtually impossible, or at the expense of too many existing conventions and establishments, but a complete flip of conventional morality is precisely what is required here. It is only an illusion that we cannot take control of the workings of our own society, or that it is impossible to defy business interests, and weave a healthy tapestry of our lives and lineage.

Return to the atelier method

“The inventive genius of the great masters of the past had created a certain mould and type of beauty. It was held that diligent study was all that was required in order to perpetuate the beauty of these forms indefinitely, and that all the value of the original creation would be preserved if only the knowledge of how to reproduce the same kind of line and the same kind of figure were handed down from master to pupil in a sort of apostolic succession.”

– Théodore Duret

The atelier method was the guild process most suited to the fine arts (in the true meaning of the word) of paintings and sculpture. It was our traditional art training system from time immemorial, in which pupils were tutored manually, often on a one-to-one basis, as prospective fine or decorative artists. Pupils studied under a master, learning a vast retinue of objective skills, intensively, in the visual illusion of painting or the principles of sculpture. Natural talent and hard work were focused on facilitating and engineering genius in line with traditional standards.

The studio was actually the private workshop of a professional artist where assistants, students and apprentices worked together producing art released under the master’s guidance, supervision and also his name. Hence there was a system of mutual benefit and you see antique artworks today ‘from the studio of Rembrandt’ or from someone who ‘worked under David’ and so on. This peerless traditional and paternal system ensured past accomplishments were not forgotten and, where possible, improved. No vague, irrational philosophy entered the process, championing abstraction or inadequacy. The maintenance of standards was paramount and shows undeniably in their masterwork, still revered today and for all time.

This was the standard vocational practice for European artists from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century and most likely, once again, like the other craft guilds, going back to Rome, Greece (the studio of Phidias) and into prehistory.



Gustave Courbet, The Artist's Studio (L'Atelier du peintre) Musée d'Orsay, Paris & the French Atelier of Painters: titled "School of Fine Arts - Painter Workshop" (Ecole des Beaux-Arts - Atelier de Peintre).

In Medieval Europe this formal education was usually regulated by guilds, such as the painters' Guild of Saint Luke. Apprentices usually began quite young, in the way of similar apprenticeships today. The system later became more obscure and faded away, along with the other craft guilds, as the academy became a favoured method of training.

I would like to repeat again (because our mutual brainwashing rails against the notion) that art, at the root of it, is craft. The chairmaker and the seamstress are artists at varying levels of genius depending on their skill and the quality of their output. The same is true for the painter or architect, each works within the tiers of their chosen trade. A plasterer or mason in ancient Rome or Tudor England needed to have a great many artistic skills. The labourer was no different to the draughtsman or the master – each knew the standard of quality, all were concerned with aesthetics and traditional motif at every level of the work. Making something for pure utilitarian purposes simply did not happen and as such there was a joy in the making of things and a cultural enrichment at the quality and style of handmade goods.

This philosophy is not actually hard to reclaim, at least at the level of our personal lives. If you need something, try to make it yourself. Use the power of action versus work. Remember work is the drone, the slave, for whom it does not matter what his labour is or the fruits, while action is the strength to labour towards your own immediate ends. Making a table, making a painting, planting a garden, making a house. It is harder but it is fulfilling and tangible. The alternative is slavery.

That is the mindset of a free man.

Here is an insight into a proper French painting Atelier, taught by no less than Jean-Leon Gerome. This excerpt is from the *The Nation*, May 6, 1869, ‘ART-STUDY IN THE IMPERIAL SCHOOL AT PARIS’ by Earl Shinn.

A Visit from the Master

A visit from Jean-Léon Gérôme was a special occasion for students in the Ecole des Beaux Arts, occurring only once a week. When the master was not in attendance, the students harassed each other, dueled with mahl sticks, and joked around.

On a typical morning, they went about their normal routines, making coffee, and, according to a student who was part of the class, “arranging themselves in the tobacco-smoke, setting palettes, filling pipes, trimming crayons, moistening bits of bread, and wringing them into erasing-balls in the corners of handkerchiefs.”

Gérôme arrived exactly on schedule, removed his hat, and placed it on a peg reserved just for him.

The students came to attention and the Italian model perked up.

He started in one corner of the room and went systematically from student to student, standing or sitting in their place, and regarding their drawing or painting with full attention and unsparing criticism.

“Observe,” he said, looking at a very neat drawing by a student, “Your muscles are inlaid against one another. They are carpentered. There is a something—that is not the vivacity of flesh. Go next Sunday to the Louvre and observe some of the drawings of Raphael. He does not use so much work as you, yet one feels the elasticity of his flesh, packed together of contractile fibers, based upon bone, and sheathed in satin. You tell me you will express that texture afterward. I tell you Raphael expressed it from the first stroke!”

“Your color rages,” he said to another student. “That of the model is lambent. Besides, your figure is tumbling, it is not on its legs. I will save you labor by telling you the simplest way of correcting this. Turn the canvas upside down and draw it over. The error is radical.”

To another, he said: “You do not yet understand the continuity of forms in nature. You accent too highly. That is vulgarity. For instance: it appears to you that the internal and external vastus, when gathered in at the knee, cause a break in the outline, like the cap of a pillar. Similarly under the calf. You are deceived, and should use your eyes; the accent is not in the line, it is in the shading beside the line, and even there far more slightly than you think. Here again, the vein crosses the forearm. You make a hideous saliency. Nature never, absolutely never, breaks a line.’

As you may note, there is no suggestion to *'just express yourself'*, no subjective *'do whatever you feel'*. No pushing towards egalitarian political narrative. The master gives hard, objective advice with reference to past masters (Raphael), demonstrating a clear idea of standards.

This is, by objective evidence, the clear and ideal way to instruct art and support high culture, and enrich our daily lives and living spaces. Where the tremendous difficulty lies in applying standards is that we must also stamp out the cancerous philosophies that bloom under the illusions of total freedom. The Modernist theory, nurtured by the wealthy business interest, will, if not exposed and trampled, erode any attempts at restoring the high art order. It is in the aid of entropy itself, a dark and lazy force all those with a will to live must combat. It is not enough to allow Modernism to exist side by side with tradition, kind-heartedly. We have tried that and their nonsense will win out as they never cease their long-term game to guile the gullible with sweet talk of equality. At the upper echelons, the custodians of culture, the major academies and galleries and institutions, the proper standard must be met and upheld. The ateliers must be re-opened with the explicit and true purpose of continuing and evolving tribal tradition. This means the people in charge must hold their tribal interests paramount, as unanimously as is possible. I have outlined now the reasons for this — it is simply and ultimately survival itself.

Concluding remarks.

Twilight of the Western arts

“In soft regions are born soft men.”
– Herodotus

Sometimes things are exactly as they seem. The first question most people ask themselves, when confronted with jarring Modernist art, is: *“Could a child could have done this?”* This is the natural response, the rational one, when confronted with something that exhibits no apparent skill. But we have each of us been trained since childhood to suppress this instinctual response, to self-answer it with a relativist assumption: “We cannot judge this work, we must assume it is genius because we have been told so.”

Of course, contrary to our training, the question is valid — indeed, the sentiment is completely true. It has done away with all objective standard, it cannot be judged by any quantity of merit, it is chaos. It is not better than a small child could do, obviously. At some point in early education when we make this comparison for the first time, a status quo Modernist teacher is ready at hand to laugh and tell us why up is actually down.

But how indeed can a painting that could have been done by an infant be considered genius? Or, equally, the painting of a monkey? Despite reams of relativist Artspeak, there is no clear rebuttal to this. Genius is literally measured by how much beyond the work of children or animals your work ascends on a rational tier. You can hire a three-year-old as a Modernist painter – but not as a doctor. But how can this then be genius, if it requires no higher thinking whatsoever?

The first step in identifying the problem is to identify that there is a problem.

“A noble man compares and estimates himself by an idea which is higher than himself; and a mean man, by one lower than himself. The one produces aspiration; the other ambition, which is the way in which a vulgar man aspires.”

– Marcus Aurelius

It would not have been possible for Neolithic cave painters to decide their time would be better spent creating ‘conceptual installations’ of randomly arranged animal hides and straw. I suppose they could have but what would be the point? What is the point of it now? If something appears to have no point, should one dig deeper until a point manifests? Does it not remain ultimately pointless?

There is a reason why during the Renaissance they did not celebrate artists making random splatters of paint on a canvas in the Uffizi — that is because it is stupid. It is patently on its face idiotic – for the reason that a child really could do it. Turner or Rembrandt did not have to compete in the creative arena with someone traipsing around confidently arranging mannequins or leaving unmade beds in the gallery and having it taken as serious art. That is because it takes a society existing, as we do, at a sustained level of luxurious stupidity to even conceive of transmitting such obvious lies.

The Rothko (famous for painting three stripes in variation) can only exist as a rebellion against classical art and its values. It has no other point, it would be laughed at and discarded in any other context. All of the Artspeak defending Rothko will point to this conclusion, that his art exists simply to daringly get away with existing. It is brave and bold for being so stupid. Our cultural handlers have manufactured an undying victimhood complaint, thriving on the eternal envy of excellence. Our safeguards are removed and all because the concept of art is tricky to define, and therefore easy to hijack. Marcel Duchamp is allowed to bring a urinal into an art gallery and before long we have lost beauty as a concept. If you lose the discipline to safeguard standards, you lose what they uphold, like slacking on your personal diet and exercise – energy must be exerted in order to have good things. Westerners have now grown accustomed to art galleries being awful and pointless as a rule.

The galleries are pointless because everything is potentially considered art. More malevolently, by pretending that virtually everything belongs under the umbrella of art, as a variety of options, Modernists confuse and disarm critics. This means they can include the undeniably inspiring catalogue of traditional art under the greater wing of their ‘everything is art’ theory. They pretend to meet tradition halfway: they too enjoy the Renaissance artists, for instance. Some will even agree about the sad state of contemporary art, sensing that the absurdity has indeed gone too far. But soon after this appeasement they will never fail to add that we must allow everything to be art, ultimately.

There is no surmounting the programming for some. To suggest standards be set and met is tantamount to a great evil in the perfectly formatted modern mind.

Indeed, many are as likely to go so far as to admit Modernism is worthless, to be outraged by it. An easy admission, this allows the emotional thinker a kind of pressure release, as an increment of truth snuck into their arguments relieves the stress of continually lying to themselves. However, invariably, after this olive branch they will simply add the caveat that we dare not set real standards on art. It does not matter that allowing art to be anything counters the possibility of measurable quality. In their minds, we cannot break the new laws of permissiveness. In a sense they are correct, everything should be art — but in truth not their art. Everything we see should be considered artistically and aesthetically with beauty values, and not their clownish reverse, which is to lazily call everything as it exits art. Modernism and traditional art are polar opposites, they are warring ideas. Therefore, pretenders who claim to like both have simply failed to understand either. Modernism and true art are natural enemies to the end and any glossing over of this fact acts in aid of Modernism (as the current prevailing paradigm). Which, again, encompasses everything it surveys as it spirals around the drain. In this way the cards are stacked against us, in that nothing less than a total rejection of accepted art conceptions from the last century is required to save art — half-measures and compromises will only ensure continued degeneration.

While the tentacles of Modernism claim everything as art, there are ironically no actual new art movements. There might be a few different names: *Conceptualism*, *Constructivism*, *Brutalism*, *de Stijl*. But they are essentially all one and the same. The identical root philosophy is at play: shock value abstraction promoting materialist nihilism. Each of our former great styles would transcend medium, now we just have one style in different mediums.

This will remain true for as long as the globalist and corporate powers keep their moneyed noose on the definition of art.

If it was possible once, it is possible again. There is more energy wasted in maintaining and imposing Modernism than traditionalism, which is the natural state of art. But we are all about wasting energy these days. An optimistic future requires nothing more than a self-belief.

The subconscious price of Modernism.

People are suffering a subconscious price for the suffocation of discordant public spaces and the crass environment of endless advertising. Nobody feels a true sense of wellbeing about their society when standing in the shadow of an obtuse corporate sculpture. Occasionally, unimaginative council officials seek to make their liberal mark by destroying the historic buildings with Modernist tourism centre growths, literally grafting a plate glass box on to the sixteenth century castle with insane hubris. Somehow, the horror of this is completely lost on such people and that can only be down to them having no understanding of what history or art actually mean. They think art is just doing whatever. That our civic deciders are so often of this mindset speaks to the triumph of our new materialist managerial class, which knows nothing whatsoever of aesthetics or true moral good, that a sort of trained ape of mediocre clerical skills could be handed the safeguarding of history and effectively ruin it.

The feeling of wrongness that this Modernism engenders feed into the other leftist lies pushing to label Western civilization as being something of no value. Society becomes a macrocosm of the guilt we self-inflict, because of lies told to us about our past and the forced disconnection from our tribal creativity. It is hard to look outside now and see anything but meaningless

money-power. History is being revised to make it look multicultural all the way through. These are lies.

There is often little solace from the demented public spaces within our private homes. Our household furniture and accoutrements are no longer parochially crafted with pride but mass-produced junk items we excitedly purchase because they break through another bottom tier of bargain pricing. This sad cycle aids internationalism and free trade against the local and the homegrown. It is the dream come true for the same business class who destroyed the guilds: controlled, unrestricted profit from the free trade of junk goods. Adornments of cheap plastic manufacture, nothing historically relevant to us, litter streets, homes, and eventually landfills. Everything is increasingly toxic, poorly executed, and spiritually fallacious. Our ancestors held artful objects that emulated nature through tribal style interpretations as being a crucial component to life. We traded history's accomplishments for a low price tag.

And where modern living space fails to dissuade, we have modern fashion. Just to be sure every last element of daily life is dishearteningly anti-aesthetic. This incredible bulwark of stupidity and laziness seems to endlessly combine themes of leisurewear and graphic-designed sweatshop fabrics. Gone for the most part are men's suits, dresses for women, or sartorial standards of any kind. The youth are half-naked and in a perpetual cycle of hippy revolution against an unseen sexually conservative oppressor that does not exist. Prevailing cyclical modern themes are garish colours, sweatpants and T-shirts, inspired by an endlessly repeating phenomenon of slutty pop stars based on the model of the careless, free-wheeling whore perpetually giving the finger to a patriarchal history. Again, too, foreign urban culture is worshipped by a brainwashed youth, whose attachment to their own history is blocked and derided as racist and sexist.

There are voluminous tomes of pompous art magazines printed every month so that people can signal intellectual pretence and express opinion on meaningless scribbles and abstract blob-shapes.

How do we raise our heads from this quagmire, while we work pointless jobs and carry out unnatural, unfulfilling routines? Who among us can say they are truly against beauty? What person would say they despise nature?

We require inspiration and exultation, we do not require superficial safety, faux individualism or the soul-death of corporate conformism. Western man must awaken the fire inside that survived ice ages, wars, famine and plague, to not be destroyed by this foolishness.

We created this technology and now we are being repressed by the very tools we shared with the world.

“Will you tell me how to prevent riches from becoming the effects of temperance and industry—Will you tell me how to prevent riches from producing luxury—Will you tell me how to prevent luxury from producing effeminacy intoxication extravagance Vice and folly.”

– John Adams writing to Thomas Jefferson

All culture is currently steered towards materialist goals — artists are now creative advertisers. Cultural decisions are decided in boardrooms by marketing executives, flattened and homogenized by committee decision-making, then washed and rinsed in a kind of gynocentric politburo of pointless Skype conference calls which serve no purpose other than delighting Boomer bosses with a bit of bread and circus communication technology. Political correctness ensures anything resembling a good idea is equalized and voted into its blandest possible incarnation — a nothingness. Mind-numbing routine governs all and everything relates back to faux-individualism.

Still, despite all this trashy decadence, through the fog of false progress, the older crafts still resonate and nobody fails to marvel at and be humbled by the sight or sound of traditional Western art. Upon seeing a truly crafted object, all fall silent in reverence and the fog of modern life is momentarily lifted, a light shines through the canopy. But most remain innocent or ignorant of the fact that the means of creation of these objects is currently lost to us.

Visit the old gallery, view an older film, read great historical minds. People of the past did not succumb to nihilism in times of great peril. It is only the false propaganda that keeps us in this state and that corrupt consensus-morality is a chain that can be broken.

Cherry pick the past and revere nature.

The concept that we might examine history and be influenced by the good and leave the bad seems difficult to express, in our age of all or nothing politics. Every passing day it becomes more difficult just to think of ourselves with self-awareness and objectivity, to ask: is our society healthy or unhealthy? Should we be allowed to make things better for ourselves? With reverence for nature and tradition in mind, new art movements are possible and with them new healthy communities. But there is one thing the Modernists do have right: that you cannot relive the past alone, that a living culture needs to be new. But we must have the facility to recognize that proper evolution is not perpetual newness alone, that when a new thing results in a loss of quality, then it is not worth discarding existing culture for. We must not chase bad ideas down the drain like we currently do, because we failed to discriminate against unhealthy trends.

To commune with nature and history a man seeks to craft. He moulds from the same clay that sustains his harvest a likeness. Prometheus shapes man in imitation of the divine. Nature provides all and is the summation of all. For Western man, reverence for nature is paramount. As I have said already all true art is craft: making a chair, painting a tree, knitting a scarf, writing a story, all have the same import and impulse. You dig the clay and shape a kiln, then dig more clay and fire a pot. You write down a few lines of thoughts on a paper or tablet. Such was the genius of certain craftsmen that from that simple impulse they eventually elevated the very idea of man and his possibilities — so tremendous was their skill that art slipped from the world of pure craft into the sublime, the philosophical, the metaphysical. This is the normal state of human life. The plastic assembly line item is dead from the moment it is conceived.

Traditionalists who defend Modernism.

There are also many traditionalists who understand the need for spirituality and identity but still fail to see that Modernism and abstract art was the original egalitarian coup. This type of traditionalist wants to discuss art only as it relates to civil or political suppositions, not in terms of pure beauty value or expression of myth or Platonic mystery. Evola himself had a weakness for Dada. Those who are not artistically inclined must be made

to realise the art dilemma is of supreme importance, as a root principle and exposition of culture and ethnic value. A return to art will shape all the other flourishings of a healthy society. Applying narrative to art can be good in terms of revealing hidden symbology, for instance, but is not the necessary or primary element. True genius painting, literature or music will transcend description, resonate emotionally and be undeniable, just seek any pre-Modernist art as example. The fallacies of the Modernists can be dispelled in a few rigorous exchanges of rhetoric. These Modernist-defending traditionalists must also be challenged and taken to task over their aiding in this plague of bad taste. More often than not their go-to excuse for liking Modernism is the outlier style *Futurism*, where the lines are blurred and abstraction is beginning to creep in. The term outlier however perfectly explains this phenomenon, and one can immediately point out to them that the only good thing about Futurist art is the healthy traditionally aspect, and not the forgettable flirting with abstract gimmick. Many traditionalists will also see the light quite quickly once you point out the fudging of descriptions that has taken place (for example, they like Art Deco but think it is Modernist). It is more prudential to remove Deco and other traditionalist arts from the Modernist moniker than to push Kandinsky and Picasso out into Postmodernism. For the rhetorical sake, let all the trash be called simply 'modern art'.

Weapon-words: combatting Modernism in daily discourse.

Modernists pride themselves on the idea that they are free thinkers, that by practising abstract ideas they have vanquished the boundaries and opened endless vistas of creativity. From their now staid and stodgy output of sameness, we can see that nothing of the sort has taken place. Indeed, philosophically, politically and otherwise they appear to have almost no mental flexibility and are unyieldingly dogmatic in the face of evidence or argument. They have lost the ability to self-reflect and question themselves, their arguments are always smug and quickly become heated. But despite the irritation of their infantile whining, combatting them in conversation and argument must be done. When you are presented with Modernist art, you should fight back.

In terms of actual rhetoric, a simple descriptive word is available to us, one that you may have noticed me using already, which is truthful, simple, and formidably defensible as its own complete tautology (similar to Modernist verbal propaganda which is *not true* yet still defensible as a tautology). Such words are required to break through the linguistic traps set by opposing emotive buzzwords, themselves the children of Artspeak. This word perfectly encapsulates the Modernist ethos and subtly mocks it for what it is, dispelling instantly its laughable intellectual pretenses — and that word is *gimmick*. Upon this kitschy foundation all Modernist art rests as a bedrock. You cannot present fine art today without a gimmick: some cheap attempt at social commentary, or some missing, abstract, simplified or urban element that ‘draws attention’ to the ‘process’ or the material, or some other goofy thing. Because they are not allowed to express the transcendent Platonic form of Beauty (that would be unallowably self-affirming), they must seek cleverness in ever-increasing layers of gimmick. The gimmick always causes the piece to mock itself and the sensing of this gimmick at work appalls the true art lover and excites the brainwashed Modernist. The gimmick makes the dullard think they are clever by being ‘forced to think’ about the artwork. No mystery can prevail in gimmick-world, all meaning in art must be laid bare and simplified. Even contemporary art made by traditional means and with beauty must sneakily add this gimmick element, ensuring it a temporary accolade and long-term disregard. The manipulation of this idea seems boundless, unless of course you reject its superficiality and philosophical childishness. But Modernists are largely people who will do whatever social pressures demand of them without referencing an internal moral compass. Whoever controls the TV and magazines will control their opinion on virtually anything. In the war of words that materialism wages, with its emotional re-interpreting of descriptions, gimmick is the weapon-word of traditional art lovers that vanquishes at once all their efforts and miserable pretence. Watch them shrivel with shame when your single word encapsulates and makes a laughing stock of their parasitic efforts.

New styles lie in the combining of past ones.

When and if we do find ourselves in a cultural rebirth, ready to mould ourselves from the new clay, then a way to achieve new art is by the

collusion of reliable influences. Always use nature as a template. Find strange and unique ways to combine and embellish working elements of past art movements. The evolution of all our previous styles worked in much the same way, via organically occurring trends and egotistical individual inspiration. You like Art Deco and Baroque? Find a way to combine their forms and motifs into something new. Again, we look at history and take from the good. But always follow ratios, always follow form, always aim for æsthetic perfection and harmony – in writing, sculpture, painting, music, architecture, all of it. Find a way to express style combinations as something new, something that allows that sense of life, of the eternal, to be inexplicably expressed. Photo-realism is not good enough, it is not a style. There must be imagination, cultural confidence and sacred mystery. Never shy away from bold, aristocratic tastes. To regain standards you have to set limits. Contrary to how emotional thinkers will feel about this, limits (structure) are the secret to opening the closed doors. The illusionary limitless abstract world is the very opposite of what it proposes. To set limits, we will have to be willing to be cruel within measure and not have endless gushing sentimentalism for every half-hearted attempt. We must be merciless when we detect relativism, vulgarity and bad art trying to pass itself off as good.

A modern grail quest.

Through this thinking, the reaching for and re-tooling of historic bedrock ideas, bound in flesh and soul, we may find our final defeat of Modernism. This is the grail quest for the new breed of Western man. If we fail, then consumer quantity will devour the last of the old world and we will truly become as rats crawling on a plain of garbage, with only ancient legends of a people who lived in fairy tales and reached for the stars.

But to win the grail we must acknowledge it is a vast war being fought on many fronts. While sinister guiding forces have led us down the garden path towards this verminous future, we must accept that it is us who have taken the bait and allowed ourselves to be duped. It was us who were seduced by easy living, an idea that was anathema to our forebears; us who have shown cowardice in the face of social ostracization. Even at the height of their success, the Romans remarked quite often about remaining on

guard against the perils of luxury. However, we have sadly gone much farther than them down that lazy road. We no longer understand in the slightest that luxury and sloth are anything to be guarded against. We now can find no moral reason to prevent becoming so obese we must peruse the aisles of our convenience grocer in motorized bikes, too lazy even to squeeze our fat bulks into anything but all-day leisure wear. Indeed, we rave with manufactured outrage at the idea that being obese is anything other than a beautiful life choice. In this comfortable boredom we have let our courage slip away into the night and now awaken from our midday nap to find an artless zeitgeist has made off with our values. But we live in high-trust societies and alien and incompetent elites have made our decisions for us. The Western culture that still exists sputters along on the final fumes of a former greatness and can only be considered a shadow of its former self.

Without æsthetic standards we do not just lose art but other functional norms lose their measurability as either good or bad. And despite our moral compass currently shifting by the week as new victim grievances emerge, we are too confused to stand any ground – and even worse, we still smugly assert our superiority over our ancestors. It is an unforgivably disrespectful attitude. There is no future if you have been taught to revile your past and to have knowledge of these truths means a forgiving attitude towards modern art, despite our desire to be nice to the poor hopeless fools, is no longer allowable. You either fight to preserve your civilization and its future like your ancestors did, or you meekly watch it whither away to nothing like a coward.

Regardless, browbeaten as we are, I do not believe we will succumb. Many are now setting out to undertake the inner-life grail quest, the search for sacred knowledge — for what is missing. Searching for the strength to keep the fire lit through this darkness and the greater dark to come. To recognize and reject the modern world as it is being presented, to accept inwardly that it is now subverted and decadent, and to prepare ourselves for a way out. A guiding flame leading to the resurrection of the Roman fides; the man of today must rekindle this heroic fire within, with tradition as a guide and art as a yoke but neither explicitly. While we must never again disrespect our past, we cannot sustain ourselves on history or mimicry alone, and a return to healthy culture will need this culture to be something

new but based on eternal principles. It will be æsthetic and virile, which means it must be adroit and pitiless towards obstacles and enemies.

This re-emergence of our true selves will come about either sooner, from widespread admittance of our mistaken detour, or later, in the more harsh and looming maelstrom of collapse. But either way, it is inevitable.

This latest cycle is ending. Our Marxists and capitalists alike are in agreement: true art stands in the way of hedonistic quantity-materialism. While we live through this dying culture, our powerlessness grows as a new and final threat rises in the form of tidal human migrations that threaten to overwhelm and destroy our European history and future. For rest assured, what art and history the globalists have failed to destroy with appeasement statue removal and Modernist architecture, the mass migration of groups with their own identity will ensure. It will all of it be physically destroyed for good. And then what human world would be worth struggling for? We may well find ourselves, at the very cusp of reaching for the stars, falling back into the shadows of a dark age at the zero hour — what immense tragedy is that?

We can see our historic sites and artworks being degraded, decayed, dismantled by hand (Palmyra), torn down and mocked in mainstream media. Much like the Mamluks used the Great Sphinx as target practice and the Great Pyramid as a quarry. If we do not stem and reverse that particular tide, nothing will outlive a combined one-two punch of materialist Modernism followed by a foreign dominant religion of fanatical Islam. Ironically, what is most threatening about Islam is likely the very thing we must reclaim to overcome it: a total, sweeping epistemology of theology, daily life, morality, law and caste that is wholly mandated by a political religion and strictly enforced (ideally with a European bias as opposed to an Eastern one). Part of what makes us unique is the European drive, at least since Heraclitus and Pythagoras, to continually soul-search for *what is good*, which we then seek to achieve. We are experimenters but when experiments fail, we take that information and move on. Unless we are wiped out completely, it is our nature and sacred duty to carry on the quest for what is good. This is the idealism intrinsic to us. Hence the selective attitude I suggest towards technology: a spiritual cultivation of the heroic,

of the philosophical, of exploration abroad (space, high technology) and verdant pastoral husbanding of life on earth, as of old.

Sadly, if trends do not change, there will be many people who will not even understand what has been lost. They will stare blankly as European art treasures are burned down, not understanding that it even has significance, and return blankly to their fast-food, shopping bargains and social distractions. Judging from the leftist zeal at the removal of Confederate monuments in the United States, many of us are sadly at this irredeemably apathetic stage as we speak. What is the point of raising a hand against tossing a 'gendered' Dutch master painting into the bonfire — a relic from older, bigoted generations that does not relate to consumerism or egalitarianism? The last man will be too lazy to raise a hand to save himself, too naive to even know how or why he is being killed.

And if my words fall on deaf ears, if for any reason we fail to overcome these challenges and revive our art and future, we should seek comfort in the fact that the cosmos has already recorded our achievement, no matter what the revised history books will say. As is the eternal vouchsafe honour of the knight errant who has kept personal honour intact, the truth will be apart from what is taught to those living that dark future. Bad times cannot last forever any more than the good. We will save what we can and let the entire cycle end intentionally, even expedite it, in full determined awareness of what is happening and what has to be done. In truth, their world will not function without us and there will come a limit to their provocations, for every nation.

Can we halt decline?

This brings us to our current major crossroads, whether we should be reversing cultural trends or seeking the end of our present incarnation. This is a very important argument which centres on the question: “Can Western civilization be saved?”

According to *Oswald Spengler's* 1922 opus *The Decline of the West* the answer is no. His interesting and well-considered theory is that civilizations are like living organisms: they are born, have a peak period and an eventual lingering decline and death. He believed that this is a law of nature as inevitable as all other types of life cycles. Furthermore, those civilizations are all based on a spiritual impulse or principle, commonly a religion, which will be unique to each. An aspect of crossing the threshold from thriving to declining is self-realization, or self-awareness, of the culture viewing itself as a completed thing. The early and golden years are all in the upward push to perfection.

If we accept this admittedly clever assessment, which recognizes the inevitability of perennial cycles in everything, then we are locked into irreversible decline regardless of what we do and all the terrible modern art, demographic shifts, civil strife, moral degeneracy, failing families and collapsing birth rates are inevitable symptoms of an already terminal patient. It could be inferred then that the advent of Modernism as an art movement was not the cause but merely a leading symptom of this fatal illness. If this is true, the West as a concept and as a civilization is doomed to irreversible decline, one way or another, whether we reclaim the true art and reverse cultural rot or not.

“Regard the flowers at eventide as, one after the other, they close in the setting sun. Strange is the feeling that then presses in upon you...a feeling of

enigmatic fear in the presence of this blind dreamlike earth-bound existence. The dumb forest, the silent meadows, this bush, that twig, do not stir themselves, it is the wind that plays with them. Only the little gnat is free—he dances still in the evening light, he moves whither he will.”

– Oswald Spengler

But can that be true and what would terminal and irreversible decline be like? Modernist art does not strike one as an unstoppable or inevitable force, although at this moment Corbusier-style housing blocks are being erected over twice the acreage that traditional buildings currently assume, this is only evidence of their current power. If Heraclitus' rule that *change is the only constant* is true, then even this æsthetic disgrace cannot carry on forever. But is it possible we are merely experiencing a downward turn that can be reversed? Or a painful, exhausting and perilous transition to some new morality? Or are we experiencing a purely manmade decline, the result of subterfuge and inept leadership that is repairable, albeit with great struggle? A sure knowledge of the answer to these questions is the difference between knowing to aid and speed up decline (to reach the next cycle) or exert the heroic energy to reverse or subvert it now. It is a big decision. We do not want to waste our efforts.

According to Spengler's theory, all human cultures have their emanations: their art and architecture, music, politics, achievements, wars and languages. And these are merely the apparatus or contrivance of their sentience. Golden age Greece, Egypt, Rome, Imperial Germany, the British Empire, Persia, the USSR and the USA have all seemed virtually immortal at one stage and all eventually died (or are currently dying) to likely never be seen again. The same can be said of the golden ages of classical China and the Islamic world, though they do seem to dwindle on seemingly forever in a dim and dormant twilight. Still faintly warmed by the fading glow of former glories. According to Spengler, curiously, the very moment an essential cultural drive is perfected, the civilizational ascent is essentially over. It only remains for a long, protracted decline and inevitable swallowing by a stronger society. At the moment the Greeks perfected the Doric style, after a long ascending labour, the progress ends – metaphysically, idealistically and pragmatically. The importance of the

journey and not the destination has never seemed more metaphorically profound.

Or does it end? The Doric style is still around to inspire and a huge swathe of this volume is worship and praise for Hellenic values. So are they alive or dead?

Spengler's theory that inorganic concepts have a lifespan is possibly an observable phenomenon at a more microscopic level. It seems an observable trend in, for instance, our favourite musical groups – there is the early brilliant stage, often leading to a climax of creativity, then a long, lingering death of bad albums and self-parody. With the arguable exception of Johnny Cash and a few others, this seems a universal truth. To grasp this meaning is to understand that everything that exists, including ideas, ebb and flow in this cycle, they must perish because they have the breath of life. *Non manet in æternum*. But of course, if this is universally true, how does that explain the few exceptions? Did Mozart and Beethoven have a period of declining self-parody? Therefore it is perhaps not universally true. As individuals, however, this may not be a damning enough observation to posit as a gap in Spengler's theories of civilizations.

The disheartening part of Spengler's theory is his observation that the entirety of the West can now be thought of as one giant culture or idea, for the reason that all the Western nations are in the thrall of America and can be said to be districts of that larger empire. Spengler spoke of this hopelessness 80 years ago, decline being an observable trend even back then. However, apart from the Mozart consideration, there are further observations suggesting the theory may not be completely solid. These may give us reason to doubt its supposed all-encompassing inevitability, or if nothing else, to pierce the veil of illusions to see the future green valley beyond.

The first reason to doubt is that the death of the West is the death of a certain idea, or a certain conception of the West of itself. It means that in its death there will be fragmentation and new ideas, nothing that likely can even be predicted, something totally alien and strange will rise out of nowhere, which seems likely in view of the unpredictable events we see occurring throughout history. Europeans, those who created the West to suit

their genetic idealism and cultural yearnings, will likely still live and require new idealisms, providing they do not expire completely. But that is the interesting thing about the future: it is absolutely impossible to predict. Nobody in the fifteenth century could have foreshadowed the invention of the nuclear bomb, nobody in the early twentieth century could have conceived of the internet. Life always takes an unexpected route. On one side of the coin we have decline is an unstoppable fact of nature, meaning collapse is outside any agency we might have, and we have no creative power in this world. The flip side is that heroes and men of agency can and will alter the course of events, under divine guidance or their own. My view is that both are true.

Even if the whole of the West falls, how could it be replaced by cultures that flourished and grew old and have been in lingering stagnation for many centuries now? That is not in keeping with Spengler's rules and in some ways these ancient cultures, whose flourishing period should be long over, are enjoying a resurgence — albeit a barbaric and derivative one. This might be a kind of illusion as they merely advantageously skirt the same toilet whirlpool that the rest of us do. Perhaps they too are somehow no more than a facet of the American-led West tearing itself apart? They certainly seem to share the same obsession with abstract Modernist art and kitschy convenience-technology. And if the entire West falls, like Rome after a fashion, would that event not merely signify the rise of a new culture, such as we saw in the rise of medieval Christian Feudalism? If everything in this universe has a life and a death, if both living beings and ideas can be seen as forms forcing their way into the plane of reality then retreating, then ideas and cultures have a lifespan. But then could not Spengler's theory itself die? In fact, since self-awareness is a trait of being past-peak, should our knowledge and self-realization of his theory be evidence that it will not actually come to pass?

“And with strange aeons even death may die.”
– H.P. Lovecraft.

If decline is irreversible, it does not mean it won't be replaced by the new vitality. It seems likely now that we have to pass through the eye of that cyclone in order to emerge on the other side. That means something

close to total destruction, including the irreparable loss of a great amount of our art treasures. But better violent temporary destruction than slow, permanent dissipation, if a bright side can be found in that outcome. This seems the likely prediction, that most of what we currently know and believe is set for the cosmic chopping block, and the sooner we let go of that which is corrupted, the more likely we are to survive. Opting to 'not survive' goes against our basest instincts and is therefore not nature's intent. There are many variables in the dice roll and tenets of primordial tradition, including change as constant, will remain eternal truths. Be prepared for a mighty change and for cataclysmic events. For those who love art, abandon completely the institutions, the academies, the system.

In the meantime, as this Spenglerian train rolls on towards the cliff, save what you can and work to save as many souls as possible by making them aware of the truth of our situation. Every one of us will die eventually, and in that sense we each live an individual doom-scenario regardless of world events or what existence delivers. The truth is your life is a natural cycle and metaphysical journey to a future transcendental event that is apart from the physical world and should facilitate the abandonment of ego before the Whole. Spiritual courage follows in this realization, regardless of what one lives through. By abandoning the corrupt modern systems, at their worst, is to recognize the need for the formation of a new culture, if it can be husbanded in such a fashion, which would exhibit the worldly wisdom that is characteristic of us at our best. *Idealism*. Armed with the knowledge of both possibilities (cyclical decline and intentionally designed decline) we might yet find an exit strategy that would be preferable to our needs. For the immediate future we can only be aware of the dead and dysfunctional aspects of our culture and work as much as possible to be free from Modernism, corporate capitalism and egalitarian lies, and uphold tradition among the chaos. We must be searching always, like quest knights, for the new art, for the victory of the local over the global, for the return of beauty values and heroic exploration and the undercurrent of the vital. The inevitable hardship of this looming reality is precisely what we need to *awaken the sleeper*. The illness will become the cure, the West as it is today is a walking corpse.

Those of us that make it through the coming cyclone must strive for those ideas that can be retrieved from the perpetual wellspring of true creativity, which flowed about our ancestral landscape as a river. Ideas and physical work that are not relativist or indefinable but natural, instinctual and the product of intense labour, and a devotion to strict and methodical æsthetic. They will be easier to see without the machinery of lies.

The answer to the question of whether the West can be saved is this: *yes, what is important can and will be*. Spengler's theorem is just that, a theory, and suffers from materialist nihilism — his brilliant assertion is its own kind of bondage, being overly negative in its material solidity, and sows hopelessness and demoralization. Once you identify a pattern and trend you introduce the possibility of changing or mitigating it. The overly pessimistic worldview is a symptom of the jilted loss of Christian faith, in the naive melancholy of losing the simplistic reward and punishment promises of the Abrahamic, but hope and faith are material realities with enormous causal effect in the real world.

Civilization cannot be revived just as it was, but with great exertion it can be renewed with a whole different colour. Fear of letting it all go is only making it more tyrannical in its dotage. The youthful wind of thumos (θυμός) found in the guidance of an anti-materialist nobility, the guiding myth of the priestly solar warrior, will herald the return of the sleeping king. And even if the struggle is in the immediate sense hopeless, we must fight today for a reversal, and tomorrow if we are overwhelmed and persecuted, and the day after as we battle bitterly onward, for the sake of courage alone. We must in every sense aid in the fueling of the funeral pyre, in forcing the modern world to self-reflect, and realise it has already died.

Draw your swords and cut away at the rot. And though you cannot necessarily kill a bad idea once it takes hold, each idea has a life cycle of its own and will vanish when nature decrees, leaving a seed-bomb of new ideas. We might still hope to be spacefarers and colossus-makers, to be spiritually and materially prosperous, and be part of a self-improving culture again. But if you tend your inner spiritual garden, the light of this truth shines on you regardless of outside events. Homeric courage is the will to greet death on your own terms, classical theism dictates that what is

eternal in us is the agency of reason which enables the action of husbanding reality, of tending and shaping the garden, of the cosmos witnessing its own light. We will not be physically free to regain our role as nature's proprietors until the enormous bonfire is lit, and what we call 'modernity' becomes the fertile compost heap of the *new growth*. Even in ruination the beauty of tradition persists, and frankly there is very little worth preserving about the current incarnation of modernity. We seek a survivable apocalypse.



The River

“Water is the driving force of all nature.”
– Leonardo DaVinci

The metaphor of a primordial river of creativity came to me in a waking dream. I believe in portent and I can see the river in my mind when I speak of it, quite clearly. You reach down into those waters, which flow from the past into the future — like genes, or the orbit of the spheres — and you withdraw a creative idea, which is related to an upward-striving concept from an ancestor, and link it to a future idea for a descendant.

Sick, unhealthy ideas come from somewhere else and have nothing to do with the river, which snakes in either direction into the past and the future. These bad ideas, which are manipulated and presented intentionally, with evil intent, are an illusion — a distraction from the lifegiving waters, which in their normal course nourish the black earth of creativity. The illusionary ideas are attacks from outside forces of chaos and entropy, as the cosmos wishes to test our mettle. Those outlying forces do not understand the true long game, the roots of our sensed loyalties. They do not feel the *logos*, the voice of the true momentum. They do not see the crystal-clear waters, the smooth rocks, or the bright green water plants beneath.

We have not had a true new art style now for 50 or more years. The importance of poetry (the bards) and the purpose of music is lost. The nine muses have been left in the void, to float in the dark cosmic milk, abandoned. To even speak of them in a modern sense sounds hackneyed or superstitious, thus they do not come because they are never beckoned. *But they still live.*

The river is a secret spiritual emanation that washed about the ancients like a raging deluge, unrestricted. Too much civilization has blinded us to nature. But I believe that this too is temporary. The moment you take up a lie, even out of politeness or kindness, you have failed and it will end badly. So it will be with the Modernists and the materialists.

The truth will out.

It may take years of unlearning what has been taught but with tools like the internet, some of us are slowly rubbing the sleep from our eyes. It is not an easy task, to seek this hidden primal wellspring. You must learn to reject social currents, to listen to the voice in the back of your head, the guiding

instinct, and be confident that it speaks the truth. People that get caught up in the *impression* of things, those whose behaviour becomes rigid as they play a part they feel is expected of them, that are false and ignore their inner voice, will be as those imprisoned in Plato's cave, watching the shadows and missing the essence. Western man, quite creatively unique in this world, can draw true and improving ideas from his primordial vision that are not stagnant and indefinable but vital and evolving – and to the benefit of everyone.

The true idea is not democratic — nothing but watered down illusion and weakness comes from shared or democratic counsel. *Too many cooks spoil the broth*, as the ancient European proverb goes. And proverbs are, of course, a tradition of essential wisdom. A true idea and a true art is the product of a solitary mind, an exuberance of personality, with intense devotion to an orderly aesthetic. The closer the result is to the singular vision, the purer and more eccentric the creativity. For better or for worse, such is the nature of excellence and God's intent of our abilities. Working from within that which nature provides, not seeking to be outside nature but observing and idealizing.

This is the prehistoric European ideal that started the inner world for us all, which remains to us the roots of our classical world-tree. The wall barring us from this river is the frightened bulk of our own people, who are the playthings of manipulative, jealous technocrats, their values swayed like random eddies with the overturned cart of post-enlightenment egalitarianism. They are an irrational army of the irascibly envious, too cowardly to abandon the false comfort of a materialist, convenience world. They are goaded by the anxiety of self-deceit to a puritan zeal for destroying the past and thereby the future. Their puppet masters do not want art, or ideas. They want a deracinated strip mall population of spiritless drones.

But our tradition has not gone from us, it is merely hidden and one way or the other, under one guise or another, under the great duress of the waning of our current cycle, we shall break their shackles. Because truth is a cleaving sword of fire, blazing with righteousness, as cruel and true as Nature herself. There is no escaping change.

The origin of the river and whether it has a starting point on the real timeline is a sacred mystery. It emanates from some *Terra Septemtrionalis Incognita*. That it flows from the past to the future is all I can say. In my imagination it emanates from a classical city-state of the psyche, such as Atlantis. I cannot say that it is eternal but it might be.

The myths of Hyperborea and Ultima Thule say that people there lived to the age of 1,000 and enjoyed lives of complete happiness. The Hellenes believed Apollo himself was venerated among the Hyperboreans and wintered there. They were a race of giant supermen linked into the Cosmos through magical powers. They were said to have psychic and technological energies far exceeding ours but they later fell and were degenerated to lesser men. This legend, perhaps not to be taken literally, speaks to our downfall from a much higher form. Like tradition itself, it is a puzzle, a clockwork spell, set in motion not as literal history but as a warning parable to enable our survival and thriving. By setting an impossible transcendent goal, you aim for the impossible and land somewhere high. The story of Hyperborea was already an ancient myth to those who wrote our ancient myths. And myth, or storytelling, was the first art. The courage of the classic hero is the life lesson. That is the *logos* that shapes the world for the better.

A man's worth is and always will be in his ability to enact dominance and change upon the world, on his ferocity and his strength of eccentricity.

Our ethical spirituality as Europeans demands rectitude, sacrifice and honour; the universe and God demand beauty and transcendence. We shall continue to undergo a difficult period and a destruction, just how much nobody can predict. I expect great loss. But I have faith that we will discover the new system, the new way, and an ancient humility before nature and an archaic revival free from sentimentalism, cowardice and materialism, that will not just rejuvenate art but science and exploration and the suffering natural world. It will be different to what came before but related, as always. It will obey the old aristocratic rules, the natural law. The hallmark of rejuvenation will be the return of the inner life, the mystical force of the hero. Respect for order and dignity will herald our vengeance

and the river will burst its dam and wash away the narcissists, materialists, polluters, and liars until a new cyclical enemy emerges.

And when the art of man and the beauty of nature are reconciled, the Earth will be wholly beautiful once more.

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