

Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics

Volume 8, 2016

Edited by Fabian Dorsch and Dan-Eugen Ratiu

Published by the European Society for Aesthetics



Proceedings of the European Society of Aesthetics

Founded in 2009 by Fabian Dorsch

Internet: <http://proceedings.eurosa.org>

Email: proceedings@eurosa.org

ISSN: 1664 – 5278

Editors

Fabian Dorsch (University of Fribourg)

Dan-Eugen Ratiu (Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca)

Editorial Board

Zsolt Bátori (Budapest University of Technology and Economics)

Alessandro Bertinetto (University of Udine)

Matilde Carrasco Barranco (University of Murcia)

Daniel Martine Feige (Stuttgart State Academy of Fine Arts)

Josef Früchtel (University of Amsterdam)

Francisca Pérez Carreño (University of Murcia)

Kalle Puolakka (University of Helsinki)

Isabelle Rieusset-Lemarié (University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Karen Simecek (University of Warwick)

John Zeimbekis (University of Patras)

Publisher

The European Society for Aesthetics

Department of Philosophy

University of Fribourg

Avenue de l'Europe 20

1700 Fribourg

Switzerland

Internet: <http://www.eurosa.org>

Email: secretary@eurosa.org

An Aesthetic Theory in Four Dimensions: Collingwood and Beyond

Robert Elliot Allinson*

Soka University of America

ABSTRACT. The purpose of this article is to synthesize four major elements of aesthetic experience that have previously appeared isolated whenever an attempt at conceptualization is made. These four elements are: Kant's disinterested pleasure, Collingwood's emotional expressionism, the present writer's redemptive emotional experience, and, lastly, Plato's concept of Beauty. By taking these four abstracted elements as the bedrock for genuine aesthetic experience, this article aims to clarify the proper role of art as distinct from philosophy and intellectualization. Rather than a medium conducive to intellectual understanding, it is argued that the sphere these four elements of aesthetic experience demarcate is one in which art leads to an emotional understanding that transforms the human condition and imbues it with new meaning only to be found in a moment of aesthetic experience.

What I would like to suggest is that an aesthetic experience is not possible in the first place unless it contains the following four elements: The first dimension is Kant's concept of disinterested pleasure; the second dimension is Collingwood's concept of the expression of emotion (Collingwood, 1938, p. 109); the third dimension is the present writer's concept of redemptive emotion; the fourth dimension is Plato's concept of Beauty.¹ My proposal is that there is no need to make an absolute choice between these differing dimensions, but rather that a complete theory of aesthetics can only exist with these four dimensions. It is not only that a complete theory of aesthetics requires these four dimensions. It is that the aesthetic experience itself cannot occur without the interaction between these four dimensions.

* Email: rallinson@soka.edu

¹ This attempt to define art within these four dimensions resembles to some extent the list scheme devised by my late, distinguished aesthetician friend, Denis Dutton's *Aesthetic Universals* as summarized by Steven Pinker (2002).

The following consists of the outlines of a trans-cultural aesthetic theory with these four dimensions.

The first dimension is well known. In order for an aesthetic experience to arise in the first place, there cannot be an egoistic interest. For example, the economic investment interest in a famous painter's painting can form no part of aesthetic pleasure. The sexual titillation that may be taken from an erotic painting can form no part of an aesthetic pleasure. This dimension forms the beginning of an aesthetic experience. But, by itself, it is not sufficient. It is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for an aesthetic experience.

The second dimension is Collingwood's concept of art as the expression of emotion. For convenience's sake, I shall choose Collingwood's version as it appears in his *Principles of Art*.² Collingwood distinguishes between craft and art along the lines of inducing or arousing emotion versus expressing emotion. While there are subtle dimensions to craft that involve planning as well as the *intention* to produce an effect (the effect could be a useful object or an emotional state), for the ease of discussion, I shall focus on craft as the production of an emotional effect. Thus, a mass movie designed with special effects to stimulate the senses is, in this sense, not art. Art, for Collingwood, is the spontaneous exploration of the inner emotions of the artist and their consequent (or simultaneous) expression through an artistic medium, whether it be painting, poetry, dance, music, drama, literature, sculpture, etc. The artist, producing art, has no intention to cater to an audience but is simply expressing her or his emotion. For Collingwood, art is cognitive and has to do, not with entertaining an audience, but with the discovery and the expression of the inner emotions

² While Collingwood's concept of art as the expression of emotion is well known, Damla Donmez most clearly captures a complete rendition of Collingwood's view of art when she writes, "Collingwood defines an artwork in *Principles of Art* as an imaginary experience by which we express our emotions" (Donmez, 2013, p. 206). While Collingwood does not use this exact phrase of which Donmez writes, her rendition of Collingwood is an admirable paraphrase. On the other hand, I do not agree with Donmez that Collingwood asserts imagination as the sufficient condition of art (for Collingwood, we need art as the expression of emotion, not only of the imagination), but I very much agree with Donmez that Wolheim misreads the role of externalization and audience and that they are, as Donmez writes, "necessary for art's epistemology not ontology" (Donmez, 2013, p. 208).

of the artist.

The expression of emotion differs from ventilating emotion in that ventilation consists of attempting to get rid of emotion, or act it out whereas “expression” in Collingwood’s special use of this term consists in discovering emotions inside of oneself through the actual process of artistic expression. Expression differs from Freudian catharsis in that there is not an attempt to get rid of the emotion in question. The emotion does not lie in the unconscious (or subconscious) in the Freudian sense. Unlike emotion in Freud, it is not the emotional residue of an early childhood trauma. Unlike the concept of Freudian sublimation, it is not the lower emotions that are kept in check by allowing them surrogates for expression. The full understanding of the expression of emotions is not to be afforded by Collingwood’s theory alone. It is only when one arrives at the third dimension of aesthetics, the discovery and the transfiguration of the higher emotions by and into the beautiful that the nature of the transformative process can be understood.³ To a certain extent, the third dimension is anticipated by Aristotle’s concept of catharsis in experiencing tragedy in which one experiences pity and fear. In order to adapt Aristotle to present purposes, the pity or compassion that one experiences is one that arises out of a recognition of the universal human condition and the fear is the fear of the fleetingness and mortality and the change in fortune that are inevitable accompaniments of human life.⁴

It is necessary to expand the Collingwoodian thesis that art is the expression of emotion to the thesis that art is the expression of the redemptive emotions of the human being. This is the third dimension of the aesthetic theory being put forth. Redemptive emotions lie deep inside the human being and require art for their discovery analogous to the external truths that lie in the universe that require science for their discovery. There is a difference in that the external truths discovered by science do

³ It is not criticism of Collingwood’s view of art as the expression of emotions that he was influenced by Croce. (Gonzalez, 2011, p. 176–177).

⁴ While Aristotle did not see the need to make the following qualification, Jose Juan Gonzalez argues, as against critics of Collingwood, that “if the reader is not able to realize the fact that a given poet has express [*sic*] his emotion, this is not an objection against Collingwood’s definition of art proper; it is an example of readers who do not belong to the poet’s community in question” (Gonzalez, 2011, p. 178).

not require science for their existential status whereas the truths brought to us by art would not exist save for the redemptive power of art.

While art possesses no objective and reminds us of Walter Pater's concept of art for art's sake, it has, if one had recourse to trade on an Hegelian metaphor, the cunning of unreason. Its cunning is to redeem human life through its instrumentality by awakening its audience to the redemption that deeper and higher feelings bring to light. This dimension cannot operate on its own and is linked so closely with the fourth dimension that while it can be logically isolated, it is functionally merged. It is necessary to discuss this third dimension by itself in order to illuminate the necessary form in which these deeper and higher emotions can come to be known.

It is necessary to emphasize the distinction to be drawn here between the present analysis and the Collingwoodian analysis by saying that the higher function of art is not only to discover emotions *simpliciter*, but to discover *higher* emotions and to transform these higher emotions into an artistic creation. To speak this way is already to distort the process, because it is in the very transformation of the emotions that they become higher and it is in the very process of turning them into art that they become redemptive. However, our linguistic tool is clumsy and it is necessary for us to use this distorting instrument to the best service its function provides.

The transformation into an artistic creation is the bridge to the Platonic concept of the production of Beauty. This element, while ruled out by Collingwood, is brought into the picture in these four dimensions of the aesthetic experience. The higher emotions become higher through the instrumentality of Beauty. It is Beauty working together with a higher understanding of the human being that brings the aesthetic experience into full fruition. Once again, this description is misleading because the higher understanding itself possesses redemptive features but these redemptive features cannot truly be seen except when bathed in the light of Beauty.

In order to gain a better understanding of the role Beauty plays as an aesthetic dimension, it is useful to consider how Collingwood's explanation of art as the expression of emotion enables the artist as creator (author, composer, painter), the performing artist and the audience to appreciate art. Collingwood's explanation is well illustrated in his *Principles of Art* with the example of the actress whose production of tears is not to

be understood as the skill that we are to admire, but in whose production we can apprehend the emotion behind those tears that she is attempting to express (Collingwood, 1938, p. 122). What is missing in Collingwood's description is the fact that the tears of the actress, in order to be appreciated aesthetically, must also create a portrait that is in some way idealistically redeeming or beautiful. I shall attempt to bring out this element, the fourth dimension, in more detail below.

Before doing that, however, it is necessary to carefully delineate the function of art from philosophy with which it can too frequently (and sometimes unknowingly) be conflated.

The confusion of art with philosophy arises from the concept that art delivers a message or a meaning. While great art, with the incredibly important exception of music and the less important example of abstract painting, usually possesses great meaning, it does not always do so. In fact, there may be the opposite: the revelation of mystery that by its very nature is devoid of meaning. Part of the appeal of the *Mona Lisa* is that it is a mystery as to what her smile signifies. It is the absence of known meaning in this famous gesture that conveys an unknown meaning that is undiscoverable that forms the essence of the aesthetic pleasure in this work of art. While it is questionable as to whether one should take an artist's opinions as to what constitutes art, Picasso is famous for his answer to a puzzled art appreciator who complained that he could not understand Picasso's paintings by saying that there was nothing to understand. To look for a meaning is to take oneself out of the aesthetic experience. To look for a meaning reduces art to philosophy. The *Mona Lisa* works as a work of art precisely because what could be taken as meaningful (the purpose of a smile) is in reality not to be understood at all. This "not to be understood at all" forms the essence of the attraction of this painting and accounts for its status as the icon of the art world. It is itself both an embodiment and a symbol of the nature of art itself, that it is *not* to be understood and thus reduced to philosophy. Art is not philosophy. What looks like it could be meaningful, a smile, possesses no known meaning and in realizing *this*, one is capable of experiencing aesthetic delight. One realizes that art has trumped philosophy. There is meaning in life that does not require, nay even destroys, intellectual analysis. However, this dialectical tension between art and philosophy must be present. Firstly, what appears as po-

tentially meaningful must exist. Then, when it is realized that the meaning it presumably betokens can never be found, the aesthetic transformation, the delight appears. There must first exist the pretension of meaning for the lack of meaning to work its magic. Meaninglessness can only be redemptive in the deceptive gesture of meaning. It may be that this is what Picasso meant when he said that “Art is the lie that tells the truth”.

There is analogy here between the higher seduction of art and the erotic seduction of the art of covering and uncovering the body with clothing. The partially clothed body is more seductive than the totally nude body because something is left unknown. What makes for the erotic atmosphere is precisely the tension between what is clothed and what is unclothed. The smile of *Mona Lisa* is a mystery. It is precisely in this mystery that the aesthetic attraction of the painting lies.

This point about meaning can work in the opposite direction in which that which appears meaningless can become an aesthetic experience when it is realized that it does possess a meaning. I recall appreciating Mondrian for the first time when I went to a little museum in Switzerland where his paintings were accompanied by an explanation written by Mondrian himself. Underneath the famous (or infamous) *White on White*, I found the explanation provided by the artist that the whiteness of the painting reflected his spiritually transformed emotions (these are my own words composed in memory of an experience that occurred several decades ago). After reading this, my aesthetic experience of the painting was dramatically transformed. I refer to this example only to illustrate that understanding may, in some cases, act as a necessary propaedeutic to the aesthetic experience. The difference between this explanation and the explanation that art provides meaning is that one does not look for meaning (that would be to take art as philosophy), but that knowing that something seemingly meaningless is meaningful can enable one to reach a higher form of appreciation. It was the freeing of the mind, in this instance, that enabled the audience (namely myself), to experience the emotion of higher spirituality that Mondrian himself (as he reported) experienced in painting this painting. Part of the aesthetic delight arose from the realization that what appeared to be devoid of meaning was actually pregnant with meaning. It required (at least for this viewer), to understand that there could be a meaning before this meaning could be experienced. That which was

experienced, however, was still distinct from philosophy, because what was experienced was not the understanding of meaning, but the spiritual transformation that occurred by allowing that whiteness to be experienced transcendently and not merely with the senses. It was the knowing that meaning was possible that gave my mind the permission to allow the spiritual dimension of the painting to override the conceptual prejudice that this was simply a canvass painted in all white. Opposite from the *Mona Lisa*, the realization that there was a presence of meaning enabled the art appreciator to experience the spiritual liberation of the artist in a purely aesthetic (not intellectual) sense.

There is no doubt that great works of art frequently contain meaning. Music is the great exception. Kierkegaard attempted to distinguish music from other arts by the fact that it was in motion whereas painting, for example, was still. But, this distinction also applies to dance, to cinema and to poetry. It is not the motion of music that lends it its special quality in the arts, but its nature as devoid of any intellectual meaning whatsoever. Knowing that Beethoven's *Eroica* represents the great Napoleon (even by Beethoven's own account) does nothing for the appreciation of the Third Symphony. The reason that it is notoriously difficult to explain how music produces its aesthetic effects is that the higher emotions are engaged with the understanding that normally accompanying them being completely absent. The great emotions great music can touch constitute a pantomime of meaning of such great proportion that enable a deaf hearer to hear mute sounds. And, this example, literally true of Beethoven, is the metaphorical explanation that accounts for the capacity of music of a certain kind to be experienced aesthetically in the first place. To attempt to "explain" music is the most difficult task in aesthetics because music delivers these higher emotions completely without the symbolic aid of the intellect. To attempt to explain *this* is tantamount to offering a prose paraphrase of a poem. It cannot be done. If it could, the poem could be reduced to the prose paraphrase. There would be no cognitive remainder. This is the whole point. *Art possesses a cognitive dimension that cannot be rendered in non-art form.* It is the nature of music to embody this quality in the most obvious form. Music is bereft of anything which the intellect can turn into philosophy. Music is the unheard language of the emotions.

In a sense, music can serve as an archetype of all art. In all art there is

a cognitive dimension that cannot be rendered intellectually. (This is true even when the cognitive dimension, as in *Mona Lisa's* smile, cannot be explained. Indeed, in this case, it is all the more true because the cognitive as mystical creates the highest appeal.) The inaccessibility of cognitive meaning is precisely what creates artistic appeal. Music represents the most obvious case of the impossibility of divining an intellectual element. It is at the furthest remove from intellectual interpretation and hence most archetypically symbolizes and embodies the unique attraction of art.

The “problem” of music is the problem of metaphor. The reason that metaphors contain meaning that cannot be rendered in prose is that the “meaning” dimension of a metaphor resides in its poetic nature. Richard the Lion Hearted cannot be reduced to a man with courage because the poetic dimension summons the background of a king in battle, a king of England, a country that perhaps was the underdog in the battle, of a king, whose possible death in battle would signify the loss of that kingdom and all that it stood for, and much more. All of this connotation does not represent the aesthetic experience of the phrase “Richard the Lion Hearted” for in gifting King Richard with the heart of a lion, the symbol of Britain itself, one’s mind is transported from the literal into the realm of the fictional, the higher realm that redeems this mortal coil, the transformative experience that cannot be encapsulated in a reductive prose paraphrase. For art lifts us up into the spirit world and it is only in this uplifting moment that our meaningless life in the mundane world can be redeemed. Thus is heralded in the third dimension of aesthetic experience, the redemptive power of art, without which true art is difficult to distinguish from entertainment.

The purpose of great works of art is not to understand their meaning, but to experience the transformative and redemptive Beauty that attends the expression of that meaning. For example, if one understands the meaning of *Romeo and Juliet* to be that we should be careful about forming relationships with partners that come from rival families, one only reaches a sociological understanding. An aesthetic experience consists of the bittersweet pleasure that derives from the understanding that from a sense of unconditional love, a tragic end is their mutual fate. This example is a good harbinger of the third dimension of the present theory because it is an example of how the expression of emotion (which requires as a neces-

sary condition, the understanding of the meaning of social relations) can be transformed into the bittersweet pleasure (the kind of pleasure that is characteristic of appreciating the genre of tragedy), that we find to be beautiful. The transformation at once accomplishes the task of redemption. Love is appreciated because it takes place with the price of loss. Does this not symbolize its very transitory existence and both its power and its powerlessness (to enlarge upon Hobbes) against the pervasive forces of conflict, rejection, sadness, lack of recognition, worthlessness, despair, despondency, ennui, betrayal, failure, and injustice in the life of the human being?

It is important to distinguish the kind of pleasure that characterizes aesthetics from the pleasure of which Sir Philip Sidney spoke of as the sugar with which the bad taste of medicine (which made us healthy) could be coated. Art is not philosophy presented in a pleasant form. If that were the case, one could pick out the philosophy from the art as one picked raisins out of a cake. One could pick out the philosophical passages of the meaninglessness of war from Pierre Bezukhov's soliloquies in *War and Peace*. But these musings in the context of this great novel are to be appreciated as *his* musings that occur to him at his stage of life, of love lost later to be regained, for it is through Pierre's eyes, arguably the most memorable character in literature, that the events of war are seen, and how this war fits into the giant picture formed by the lives of all the characters in the novel, how it affects them and how it heightens and lessens the personal experiences all of the characters have undergone and will undergo. It is a novel of human emotions in which the devastating and meaningless spectacle of war intervenes and plays a role in subjugating and highlighting those emotions. It is not a treatise on the philosophy of war. The novel is not the sugarcoating that enables us to take the problem of war seriously.

It is time at last, to discuss the form of Beauty, the fourth dimension of this theory. What is beautiful about *Romeo and Juliet* is the recognition of the eternal conflict between ideality and reality and how and why the fleeting emotion of love both edifies and saddens the human condition. We appreciate love at its height (we willingly suspend our disbelief that the universality of love is represented by the love between two young teenagers, both in Shakespeare's time performed by males), because it embodies the place of love in the mortality and ultimate dissolution of human life.

Love is that stage of Beauty before deterioration and fatality. Thus it is captured in this archetypical play. Understanding all of this is essential to the emotional feeling that characterizes and informs our aesthetic pleasure. But, it is not the understanding that we are attempting to discover (that may be the goal of the philosopher), but the ultimate experience of the Beauty of tragic emotion that is the end of the artistic production. It is this ultimate experience of which Diotema spoke, that made life worth living. It is for this experience that we attend the drama. For if we do not experience this redemption, life is not worth living.

The art object is not, as Collingwood wrote, the painting on the wall. This is a physical object. A perfect forgery of a Picasso would be no different than a real Picasso (its economic value, upon discovery, would differ). The real painting is that expression of emotion that exists in the painter's and in the audience's mind. *Guernica* expresses the horrors of war. But, that is its intellectual meaning. Its artistic expression is the arrangement of the parts of the horse in such a way that we experience the feelings of suffering that attend the horrors of war in just the way we would experience it if we were a horse torn apart. We experience it (if we do) through the subjective reenactment of the suffering of the dismemberment of the horse. It is the loss of the horse, its function, its Beauty, its power, its symbolism, that embodies and symbolizes the utter mercilessness of war that takes no prisoners, where its "collateral" damage, including the innocent animal, is its real horror.

Aesthetics is itself a contradiction since it attempts to put the mute into words. Emotions can only be felt, not verbalized. When we experience emotions properly, we transcend the words that we use to convey them; we transcend the gesture of the dance; we transcend the notes of the music; we transcend the bronze of the statue. To what do we transcend? We transcend to that state of Beauty that Collingwood wrongly removed from his theory. The horse, a thing of Beauty, is dismembered. In *Guernica*, we experience the loss of Beauty. Indeed, as we see the parts of the horse, we remember the whole that no longer is. The whole of Beauty is dirempted. The power of the painting lies in its Beauty; in this case, Beauty lost.

I have used the example of Plato's form of Beauty to illustrate that Beauty is universal. It is present in differing individual works of art, and yet,

it is the same in all. While different cultures may take different objects as beautiful (the European the curve of a female hip – the Japanese, the nape of a female neck), the experience of Beauty is universal. The expression of emotion is not enough to characterize the aesthetic experience; the expression must take on the redeeming human transfiguration of Beauty.

For Plato, Beauty has no content. In a way, he was right. The content is dissolved into the feeling of Beauty. At the same time, it may be said, to adapt Aristotle and blend Plato together with Aristotle, that it requires the individual work of art to embody that invisible form of the Beautiful. For Aristotle, the individual horse contained Plato's abstract Form. For Beauty, it is the same. It is invisible as it is the same in music, dance, painting and sculpture. Beauty is the same in all works of art and is the end result of all art.

What of comic art, dissonant art, a bronze sculpture representing human feces, for example? Even the sculpture of turds must possess some brown color and some comic arrangement. Comedy, the mocking of art, is itself an art. While its form of Beauty is subservient to its shock value, the shock value is what brings the audience into the realm of the aesthetic transformation. Formerly, comic relief was utilized as part of works of art, not as the whole. For example, the graveyard scenes in *Hamlet* or the entrances of the drunken revelers in the *Symposium*. These would bring temporary relief from the tragic contexts and gain their comic stature from the contrast. Absurdist plays such as Ionesco's *The Chairs (Les Chaises)* provide further examples that gain their aesthetic value from their contrast to expectations. Duchamp's toilet, Warhol's soup cans, do not seem to be especially beautiful (although in abstraction from their meaning and use, the lines of a toilet may be artistic), what is "beautiful" is the realization that there is an artistic value in the disinterested pleasure that results from understanding the mockery of civilization that the artist brings before us. That this is not a traditional form of Beauty, a redemption of the human spirit, is all right. It is a relief from the conventional—a freeing of the spirit from the ordinary, a slap in the face of the obligatory. This relief, this comic relief, is itself a transformation of the human spirit, a liberation of the spirit from the mundane. The mundane, the toilet, is, viewed as comic art, a transformation from utility and conventional valuation. This is art in which the Beautiful plays a secondary role. The transcendence is

due to the taking of the ordinary as artistic, the ugly as beautiful; this role reversal affords laughter and laughter is a gateway into transcendence. It is beautiful, that is, liberating, that we can take a toilet as a work of art. This is an expression of emotion of the artist. The artist is fed up with conventional values and is finding that we need to free ourselves from the concept of what is and what is not art. It is this very freeing that constitutes an aesthetic experience and redeems itself as art. That it may not be great art does not mean that it is not art at all.

In the model of an aesthetic experience presented here, we can combine the notion of disinterested pleasure, the discovery/artistic expression of emotions, the transfiguration of these emotions into a redemptive form and the production of universal redemptive Beauty into what makes up an aesthetic experience. It is the aesthetic experience, originally created and then experienced, that makes up the content of what is art. Adding to Kant and Collingwood the Platonic concept of beauty provides a full and rich explanation of how and why art can move us and the role it plays in human life. Beauty, the ephemeral alteration from the ordinary, makes emotion worthwhile and redeems the dross into gold. Musical emotion is the mute made audible; poetic expression is the inexpressible made intelligible—painting, sculpture and dance the invisible made visible. Beauty gives sound to the mute, sightedness to the blind and hearing to the deaf.

The four dimensions, just as Plato's four parts that make up the experience of knowledge that he elaborates in his *Seventh Epistle*, do not exist in isolation from each other. All throughout, Kant's notion of disinterested pleasure pervades the aesthetic experience. The disinterestedness is a necessary condition for the aesthetic experience to take place in the first place. All throughout, Collingwood's revealing and subtle notion of art as the expression of emotion and a cognitive discovery percolates through and both provides for and enriches the aesthetic experience. Without this, art cannot be distinguished from entertainment. All throughout, the concept introduced by the present author, of the redemptive power of art to make life worthwhile by bringing to birth the higher emotions, that makes the expressions of emotion universal and redemptive of the human spirit in the face of the flatness, the meaninglessness, the wastefulness, the crudeness and the ultimately disappointing nature of life devoid of this re-

deeming power of art. All throughout, it is the Beauty that is retrieved, the Beauty that is fashioned, the Beauty that is brought to life, that, conjoined with the higher emotions that are discovered, that transforms the dross into gold, and produces the magic that is the province of art and art alone.

These parts are made possible by and through each other and are only logically separable. Kant's disinterestedness comes into being precisely because the higher emotions are engaged. It is in the discovery of the higher, redemptive emotions (already one can begin to integrate the second and the third dimension), that one moves away from the emotions that grasp, the emotions that cling, the emotions that dissatisfy, denigrate and separate one person from another. The higher emotions themselves are brought into being by the art of Beauty. Beauty, that mysterious, transformative force, is the heir attendant of the higher emotions; it waits upon them and awaits and informs their presence. It ushers them into being and sustains their existence. It is their ultimate destination and their ultimate fulfillment. But, it cannot perform its magic on its own. On its own, it is an empty form. It needs the cognitive dimension of the emotions to usher in its own being. It unfolds with the discovery of the higher emotions as the unfolding of the peacock's tail is heralded by the approach of a mate. It assures the disinterestedness of the aesthetic attitude and much more. It holds the higher emotions in place and redeems them. It redeems the human experience with an enhanced value. The higher emotions themselves are redeeming. But, they, too, need a higher expression, an expression that transcends even their bittersweet understanding of the finitude of the human situation. Beauty is the gift-offering that transcendence brings. Beauty infuses the artwork as a whole; it cannot be reduced to the artwork. It is a universal that is present in all great works of art. In the experiencing of the beautiful, one experiences one of the great fruits of the human spirit. This experience is the same in all great works of art. The work of art is a tribute to beauty. Beauty in turn would not exist without the work of art which is its vessel, its votive offering. The work of art gives birth to Beauty and Beauty itself is the grace note that sounds the redemptive power of the higher emotions.

When one sees the finger of Adam and that of G-d reaching out to each other on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, one sees that the fingers of the

human and the Divine do not touch though they stretch with unbearable emotion towards each other. The reaching out but the impossibility of realization creates the insufferable beauty of Michelangelo's detail. Beauty blossoms when the higher emotions reach out to achieve their highest ideal, the ideal of creation and immortality that forever eludes their grasp. Beauty bathes the human spirit with redemption for while it cannot reach its goal of immortality, this highest emotion, the human spirit reaching out to its creator, painted on a ceiling of a chapel, is an archetype of the role of art in human life, its capturing in images the finite reaching out to the infinite and thus depicting the plight of the human being, its immortality achieved in the only manner possible, by works of art that rescue the human spirit from obliteration by time.

References

- Collingwood, R.G. (1938), *The Principles of Art*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Donmez, Damla (2013), 'Collingwood and 'Art Proper': From Idealism to Consistency', *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics* 5, pp. 206–220.
- Gonzalez, Jose Juan (2011), 'Art as the Expression of Emotion in the Language of Imagination: Dickies' Misunderstandings of Collingwood's Aesthetics', *Art, Emotion and Value: Proceedings of the 5th Mediterranean Congress of Aesthetics*, Cartagena, pp. 175–184.
- Pinker, Steven (2002), *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature*, New York: Viking.