

## ART: A PROPER DEFINITION

### *The nature of art*

Art is that which puts us in a state of meaningful emotionality. Such state is defined by a sensation of having been communicated something humane with a perceived expressive authorship<sup>1</sup>. It can be more vaguely described as a feeling of resonation, rumination, trespassing the mundane<sup>2</sup>, something beyond oneself, a feeling of transcendence. The factors that compose the perception of art are:

- Content: the elements that compose an artwork.
- Meta-context: the elements that inform it outside of itself, be its author, its development process, other artworks...
- Self-perception: how the past and present existence of oneself regulates the emotional impact of the content.
- Art Sublime: the prior experiences with artistic content, and how that shapes our interpretation of yet unseen art. It represents one's conception of everything that is effectively considered art.

As disappointing as it has been after all the hours poured into it, I've concluded that art can hardly be described without the prior assumption of what is art: in the same way that sweetness is described as the taste of that which is sweet, and the best way to define that is to exemplify it, with honey or sugar, art can only be understood through having experienced it by oneself.

In the same way that sweetness is not a property inherent to food, and instead depends on our taste buds and how they send that information to be interpreted by the brain, art only exists in the senses of the individual. Another comparison would be origami figures, which are folded paper, but once appreciated by a human mind, they gain an abstract quality, that being the represented element of the figure. Similarly, art is not defined by the wavelengths of its sound, the ink that populates the canvas, or the bits that conform a program. None of those elements are art; they are but the codified mechanism by which we can reach the perception of such.

The one and only truth I've been able to derive from art (and the multiple art forms that are and will be englobed by the concept) is precisely that, its nature as a perceived quality. There are many other elements I considered as apt for the definition, be it from other definitions or by my own volition, which I'll now list, and argue against, since they are not decisive factors, although some can affect our perception of art (but not our definition). This way, I will set a baseline to why the provided definition can't be expanded further:

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<sup>1</sup> In this instance I'm not referring to authorial intent, as we will see later on, but to the perception that a human-like-minded author exists, independently of the truth. In other words, I refer to creation intent, not creative one, thus not implying elements of author intent, meaning, purpose or self-expression.

<sup>2</sup> As in being different from the ordinary elements of our life, not with a connotation of mysticism.

- **Emotionality:** here defined as literally anything that can make us feel. Since emotions are a reaction to stimuli, and since we have it in our nature to be conditioned by our environment (the reason why art has an element of self-perception), anything has the potential to arise emotion, making it too generic of a defining quality.
- **Author intent:** if the creation was made with the intent of being art, it is. My biggest problem is that intent is something that we can't know for certain, that we won't get most of the times, and which can be very dependent to the time and place in which a creation is made. Conclusively, we take death of the author as a necessary true to set the standard of what is art, even if it can intervene in our appreciation of it (meta-context). Another argument against considering authorial intent is that under the assumption that it qualified as art, the cyclical nature of the definition makes it useless.
- **Practical purpose:** art is that which doesn't have a clear purpose. This sense of purpose implies a complete understanding of the cultural context of the creation, which brings the same problem as the author intent. It also raises questions on whether shared purposes (like an artistic and economical one) can coexist, and if so, how that affects art. Incidentally, it could be argued that art has purpose, be it to emotionally resonate with someone, to escape reality or to showcase new ideas, thus engaging in a matter of opinion that doesn't concern the making of the definition, because we can't back up such claims beyond personal belief.
- **Originality / creativity:** those are factors very usually tied to the popular concept of art, especially on how it's made. That means it relies on authorial intent, but on top of that, it's also dependent on the subject's Art Sublime, making it doubly unreliable of a factor. To top it off, it's also dependent on the Art Sublime of the author, meaning it's not a qualitative intrinsic factor of the creation process, but an intended decision based on how the author wants its creation to be perceived in contrast with its perception of others' works.
- **Self-expression:** if an element expresses authorship, it's art. What this fails to account is that, unless we are following instructions devised to construct a creation only composed by elements that solely serve to fulfill the creation's practical purpose, mostly every act has the potential to imply elements of self-expression, on top of depending on perceived authorship, because again, self-expression is a perceived quality, not a measurable one.

- Meaning: meaning really is just a subtype of author intent, and because our brains are hardwired to constantly perceive patterns, we can extract meaning from everything, be it there or not.

All of those factors can be summarized to be perception-dependent, therefore not decisively defining, because they can't be adequately identified. However, if we look at the given definition, "that which provides meaningful emotionality", we could make the same case, and thus deem it equally invalid. My argument for this is the following.

While it could be argued that any of the previously mentioned factors is necessary to art, they can be found in other contexts, or are already discussed to escape our control to serve a defining function (like creativity). Through the provided definition, though, only subjects fitting the qualifier of art can be included in it. Similarly, just because, for example, intent only exists in the eyes of the observer, it doesn't mean we can't define it; we just can't reliably use it as a basis for a common definition, because it's not demonstrable, it's part of an experience. In conclusion, since the nature of art doesn't impede our definition of it, and such definition only includes that which is art, it isn't a stretch to accept it as a valid one.

To see the extents at which the definition can stretch, I came up with three examples I'm particularly fond of:

- A fascinating, interesting, revealing, depressing or informative essay isn't art. It can make us feel certain ways, and it can be an eye-opener, but I would hardly describe it as emotionally meaningful, because they aren't made to carry a weight beyond its superficial level, even if what is there can be emotionally strong (say, a study of the situation of depression around the globe). If there was an essay made in such a way that it resonated with us, however, I think it should be considered art. After all, the thematic base of any good narrative is in many occasions something similar to a transcendent essay, although at that point it would be worth considering if it's an essay anymore.
- Imagine a field of flowers which emulates a map of the Earth: the spots where prospering countries would be are filled with lush, blooming flowers. On some other points, the ones that represent countries with high poverty indexes, there are cut buds. The zones that would be the oceans are filled with dead plants. Admiring a field of flowers can be relaxing or entrancing, but I would say that being witness to the described garden would, more often than not, yield sensations more akin to a feeling of humane resonance. Consequently, and regardless to how this garden was formed (since the perceived impression would be that of human intervention), it's art.

- If someone was putting on an act, say, to manipulate someone, and the victim felt humanely compelled by it, it couldn't be considered art because, regardless of the victim realizing the true intentions of the perpetrator, there isn't a sense of authorship, that is, the act isn't perceived as an expression of the author, but either as part of the manipulator's natural behavior, or as a conditioning tool. Note how we make the distinction in this case because we consider the artwork's (in this case, the acting) purpose, but authorship is not based on such, purpose just being a factor that can indicate whether there is a will from the author to express themselves. If we took this example to propaganda, we could consider it art once there isn't a social state in which it could be effective, because it loses its "mindless" purpose, and it's perceived to have authorship.

#### *Added comments on the nature of art*

After seeing this, we can take a look at some postulations made by other art theories:

- Aristoteles debates some parts of Plato's theory of mimetic art by saying that despite it being a replica of that which exists (in themselves being replicas of the pure ideas they represent), the fact that the author makes it infuses it with a unique quality that compensates for the loss of fidelity to the idea.
- Plato qualified art as a possible danger due to its emotional resonance, meaning it was an appreciated quality of art since the first discussions of the concept. From my point of view, his examination of art as a mimetic subject exists to inform how this reaction is undesirable (interestingly, he held music as a powerful educative tool, which could be explained because it's the falsehood in the author's explained reality which he rejects; it could be that since music doesn't imitate but its own ideal, such implications don't imply). Where I'm trying to get to with this is that Plato's theory of mimetic isn't a defining one, but a consideration on its practicality, from which the only defining aspect is its emotional resonance; from this, it seems obvious that Plato leaned towards an expressionistic conception. Similarly, the whole of formalism, which embodies the idea that art's value is defined by its structures, not the understanding that can surge from them, also has an expressionistic reading, as the structures are only well-made (or can only be given a value) because there is an emotionality tied to them: intrinsically and in regards to each other, they have no value. The same can be potentially said about institutionalism, as long as the metrics it uses to make its considerations are fair (an example of something not fair would be qualifying art based on nationality or ideology).

- Institutionalism makes a good point about how the nature of art seems like a consequence of a social framing of the artwork as such, since the same object could have different considerations depending of the context in which it is presented. However, I do not think an art world needs to exist to experience art, even if the concept of art wasn't known to the observing subject, as long as the meaningful emotionality emerges (which might require a certain mindset, but not the notion of art necessarily). This is not to say that the art world doesn't exist; in fact, many artworks are art precisely because they can only bloom in such context (meta-contextual factor of the experience). Regardless, I consider art, as a broader encapsulating concept, to not be dependent of an institution but of the observing subject, even if I agree that a more well-versed instituted center probably has a larger Art Sublime than an average observer, and thus can make more critically accurate claims. This distinction is made, and even necessary, because the matter of the question isn't whether something is or isn't art, but how it affects each one of us.
- Berys Gaut details a series of factors that can be used to define a part of art's essence, of which I want to touch upon some:
  - Presenting an intellectual challenge: there's a key factor that will vastly alter how such challenge is considered, beyond one's own quality of information processing and motivation to do so, which is one's Art Sublime. Depending on how well-acquainted one is with the meta-context of the media and its structures, the degree of challenge will vary. It is worth noting how this intellectual challenge, if it were to take place, conforms part of the art appreciation process.
  - Being an artifact or performance consequence of a high degree of skill: this is an interesting consideration, because it is not a necessary condition, as the cluster theory has no obligatory factor to it other than the considered artwork being created. This implies that a lesser-trained individual can create art; the question this arises to me is if someone with a high degree of skill can create something that isn't art.
- This cluster consideration of Gaut is a consequence of the acceptance of art as a qualifier in degrees, that is, art isn't a binary attribute, but gains more of it the more qualities it fulfills. While I agree there is a gradient in art appreciation, I don't think we can decompose the elements that generate the emotional reaction into separate elements: while there is critic merit in being able to identify why an artwork makes us feel deeply, evaluating it piece by piece is misleading, because if we take the piece from the whole, and we judge it, it lacks any reinforcement or effect it get

from other components, while trying to judge the artwork with the removed piece can easily lead to a verdict that evaluates something essentially different from the original artwork. Moreover, because the perception of art is dependent on the Art Sublime and the self-perception factors, the perceived degree of quality will vary in different evaluations (especially the more those change), meaning this gradient of quality is in itself subjective. If the emotional evaluation (which we have established as the only common point in the art experience) is partially removed from the artwork's properties, it is fair to assume there is a skill of practical craft related to, but separate from, a skill of artistic craft.

- A possible rebuttal to the expressionist approach stems from its assertion of art as a personal estimation. Because of this, we, supposedly, don't have a way to "objectively" judge the artworks, thus we can make no real distinction of quality, meaning our communication in regards to art will be flawed and highly ineffective. The thing is that, as we discussed earlier on this essay, the artistic is a quality necessarily found in the perception of the subject that experiences it. As a consequence, we can either establish certain rules of what is "good" art in each field, and try to play by them to see what can be done with such restrictions (which as good as they can be for creativity, if are kept at all times remain a limitation for potentially different experiences; not to speak on how those restrictions will either be imposed, or many will surge depending on the culture / field / community... which goes against the purpose of establishing the restrictions in the first place), or we can establish other ways of judging and evaluating art that takes into account the ideas of self-perception and Art Sublime, that is, that understands the judge to contextualize the judged. If we don't take the second approach, we aren't judging art as a human experience, but as a closed cultural agreement, because by nature, art has no rules or limitations as long as it gets to be appreciated. Ironically, the nature of art already points towards an open-interpretation approach, because if we were to take the formalist's, of limiting art's considerations to its structures and observable characteristics, we could technically be able to achieve a formulaic production method that should be considered quality art by their definition, killing in the process any semblance of meaningful emotionality, thus the notion of art itself.
- Joseph Kosuth defines art as art, allowing a redefinition to adjust the past definition to whatever novelty appears. Putting aside the vagueness (which basically comes to say that art is that what each thinks to be art, despite how unjustified that belief may be), this definition emphasizes the expansive nature of the subject, and the incomplete range of expression we have access to at each point in time. Considering that the Art Sublime functions as a limiting factor, because it lessens the impact of an artwork that shares an emotionality awakened by a previous one, there is an intrinsic drive to desire such expansion (albeit it's very easy to stagnate

in the diversity of experiences that can be gained, by restraining oneself to a specific context of the media). The means by which such expansion can occur are a consequence of building an informed Art Sublime that will shape the individual, on top of their own unicity, in such a way that new experiences, be it in intensity or in nature, can be crafted (personal skill / technical knowledge / technology expansion are other possibilities, but those are necessarily contingent to the consciousness of the individual's Art Sublime, because the experience, the meaningful emotionality derived from the artworks, is the essence of art, while the tools to create it merely serve as path-openers to differently appeal the individual's senses, which we take advantage of to achieve new experiences that other medias or approaches couldn't).

### *In creating art*

Now that I've made certain key statements, as well as given a definition, I would like to discuss on practical aspects that the previous rumination has led to.

First of all, the irrelevance of being an artist. One cannot know themselves artists but by themselves, if one is to trust only the emotionality of the creation; one is necessarily an artist, because someone will inevitably relate deeply with any depicted human experience. In either case, being an artist is unimportant, because the essence of art isn't intrinsic to the author or their intentions. In other words, an artist is a creator, and is a concept that either serves to describe someone who works on what is commonly referred as "artistic disciplines", or someone who creates in the way they think art should be made, in no case revealing if their creations are, indeed, art. In fact, that's the point, that art can only be discerned by exposing oneself to it. Despite how irrelevant the discussion of what an artist is may seem, I bring it up because it implies that one doesn't have to be an artist to be a painter, or a writer, or a dancer. I bring it up because no one can make the conscious choice of being a creator of art; in the same way one doesn't become or stop being one. Understanding what any creator (including oneself) is doing will require examination beyond the premise of creation. It's easy to think of oneself as an artist, creating because that's what the title requires, but if there are no artists, and one simply creates, suddenly there isn't a path being followed anymore, begging the question of what is intended when acting to create<sup>3</sup>.

If, despite this, one is assured what they want to create are emotionally meaningful experiences for the sake of such emotionality, there are a few observations to be made in regards to the previously made considerations.

As I already touched upon, the Art Sublime is a limiting factor that incentivizes the expansion of artworks. Considering how difficult it is to improve the media

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<sup>3</sup> Just to be clear, I'm not referring to the intent of the artwork, but the mindset behind what is desired to be achieved by creating. This is especially useful when the creation process isn't done alone, although anyone can benefit from putting some thought before stroking with the brush.

ignoring the legacy of thousands before us, it is almost a requirement to enter in contact with past artworks to contextualize and develop one's own abilities. Because of that, the standards to which we will hold the emotionality of our creations rises, even if our objective isn't to surpass said legacy. Parallel to this process of constant discovery, once we understand the building blocks that allow for the emotionality of such legacy, the innovation has to come from how we are capable of mixing or adding new elements to our tool belt. The implications of this are that we have to understand art, we have to study, interpret and explore new perspectives that we aren't fluent with, because those that came before us did so. Because powerful creation needs intentionality, be it conscious or not, one must build their own ever so unique vision as a creator. Limiting one's understanding to what they have been fed implies an incapacity to create outside what the media already has to offer, yet one has to be constantly and diversely fed, even if it won't directly show in their creations, because extensive rumination and concept development, easily acquired from interpreting others' ideas, is what leads to personal growth in the form of interrelating previously known but separate concepts, which then will translate into new applications and interpretations of the media's capabilities.

It is relevant to note, though, that art's core is not defined for its technical aspect, but by the reaction it causes: as important as it is to study the internal structures of the chosen creative media, and as useful as it is to expand such media, it won't succeed as an artwork unless it is capable of humanely communicating its essence. Whoever can connect to the experience is irrelevant, and to what degree it succeeds, is too; only the creator can decide whether it's intended for many or not, and what is the real success of the artwork. The truly important question is how do we imbue our creation with emotionality, with the joke being that if we could invent a formula, it would probably go obsolete, because by following it, we would become numb to its application. In my opinion, there are two ways of achieving meaningful emotion effectively: honesty and personal experience.

Honesty is important because we don't know how to arise transcendent emotions other than by replicating the elements in the setting that made us feel the emotions. The simplest way to connect is by creating something we know we relate to, then hoping that feeling will be communicated to others; the furthest we stray from the human essence that defined the experience, the less control we will have to guide our audience to it. Consequently, we need the capability to look back to an experience and be able to identify relevant subtleties that could have impacted how we lived them, to then be able to put that into an artistic composition.

Personal experience is a funny one. Honesty can only be applied when there is a humane experience being told to begin with. A creator that desires to make art, therefore, has to not only observe and unravel the essences in their life, but have to emotionally resonate with what they live. Regardless of how truthful their ideas are to reality, a creator that doesn't know what they are trying to communicate will hardly do it properly. Achieving personal experience doesn't



have to be about going out and travelling around the world; most of all, developing them depends on who you are, and being able to find the kind of situations in which you resonate with an experience frequently, then trying to emulate such situations. In this regard, I've found consumption of potential art to be the most effective method of developing personal experiences; while human interaction can be greatly benefitting, especially for the authenticity and emotional rawness it provides, experiencing art both provides regular and consistent experiences, as well as the opportunities to analyze and further develop an understanding of the craft (a great middle point is interacting with people to put into perspective the judgment of said artworks, even if it may not provide the full range of experiences that other social circles can). To me, enriching one's humanity is so fundamental to creating that anyone with a sleeping heart is destined to be a craftsmanship, not a creator of art, no matter how masterful they are in their technique.

Fortunately for any creator, once technical skill, communication skills and personal emotional depth are achieved, there is a plethora of ways to go about expressing meaningful emotionality, which means a wide range of elements with which to experiment and develop one's style. In short, all of those can be summarized as factors of complexity: because the Art Sublime pushes us towards creating differentiated content, but our capabilities of expressing very different ideas are limited (especially if the previous factors are not accounted for), we have been adding elements that deepen the technicality of the craft in favor of building meaningful emotionality. The following will be a short discussion of common elements that can be capitalized on in all arts, for the sake of some insight I think worth noting:

- Technical style: when achieving a resonant emotionality, it refers to a strong sense of self, especially in its most direct elements (visuals, sound, word choice...), serving to cohesion the whole and bringing back the emotional core tied to authorship (although it can be self-contained in an artwork) every time one of its triggers is reused.
- Meaning: despite meaning's inexistence outside of conscious minds, it's a powerful tool to add layers of perceivable authorial intent, enlarging the emotionality by filling the artwork with more content in the same space, elevating both the communicated themes and the quality of the craft. Since what we know to be true is the emotions, it is not unusual to find meaning at such peaks, as a justification that allows us to expand and communicate the essence of the sensations rationally.
- Interpretability: sometimes tied to meaning, it's the range of experiences that can relate to a metaphoric conflict; this refers to how generalist a conflict is, in turn, how many people can connect with it despite having different contexts. Approaching meaningful emotionality through interpretability usually runs into a problem of confusing relatability with non-specificity, where the more vaguely it is presented, the more difficult

it will actually be to relate to a specific, personal experience; what generalist relatability is built on is essential resemblance.

- Purpose: whatever a creation is made for can add to its own value, because anything that can be attributed to it beyond its own content can be perceived to comment on itself, thus expanding how we judge it. Whatever its meta-context is, especially if it revolves around an ideological debate, it will grow detractors of the creation, but we must consider that all decisions can potentially do so, it's only that when adding a purpose, we more easily make them visible, because it can stop being a creative choice, and be seen as a social one. What is important to consider is that purpose is situational, and very tied to the present, and even so, not all who live in the same age as the creation will know the context to appropriately interpret such purpose. As much as this can happen with any other element of an artwork, it is especially delicate for purpose, because being misunderstood in the present makes it exponentially more improbable to make this element connect in the future.
- Innovation: as it has already been stated, novelty, creativity or originality are very relative concepts, which I find are mostly used to describe technical style decisions (combining a long list of superficial elements will hardly ever yield coinciding results compared to other creations). Nonetheless, it is possible to craft (if impossible to truly know if they are) experiences that have (and usually take advantage of) a unique component be a cause for the meaningful emotionality of the artwork. For realistic consideration's sake, we can define innovation not as that which evolves or expands the media, but as the effort from the author to create differently. Just beware to not innovate for the sake of being special, and aim for a meaningful experience.
- Uniqueness: the one way in which we can guarantee a certain level of uniqueness is by taking our most radical aspects of life, the ones most untied to the common human experience, as reference for the creation. This concept powerfully relates to technical style in the emotional regard, and to meaning and innovation in the rational one, but it doesn't have to be so, being expressed in many minute facets of the process. It relates more to adding personality to character, this second one being the technical style.
- Emotionality: we can hardly achieve meaningful emotionality without a previous emotional work; we shouldn't create just to emerge feelings (at least if the objective is to create art), but arising them facilitates delivering a stronger deep impact. I make a distinction among two types:

- Contextual emotionality: that which derives from the interactions of the elements at play.
- Intrinsic emotionality: that which is found within the elements at play. Those can be divided between instinctual reactions and conditioned reactions. The first are something as simple as adding a snake to a wide shot, immediately setting a threatening – unsafe tone. The second, however, can refer to reactions that we've built upon (for example, tying a concept to a specific emotional tone, then mentioning it to set the tone in advance), but also to previous associations the receptor might have made, which will impact their emotional state (we can't control nor predict those most of the times, but it's good to be aware of it for certain cultural contexts).
- Media usage: while this concept can tightly relate with technical style, meaning, innovation and uniqueness, it can also exist as a standalone path to meaningful emotionality. Since each media has implicit strengths and weaknesses, being able to communicate information through the elements that cause the less noise is a facilitator of connection, thus, proper transmission of the resonating elements.
- Polish: the better the various elements of a creation tie together as intended, the more fluid and smooth the experience, which in turn makes the lived experience closer to the author's ideal, because there is no effort wasted trying to correct what would be perceived as imperfections, or trying to connect disjointed elements that ought to be clearly tied.

## ANALYZING ART

When talking about art analysis I don't want to limit myself to art critique, because the following thoughts apply as well to more transient and judgment-free evaluations, and I consider it important that, when speaking about art, we do so with an understanding of the subject's nature to avoid empty criticism. After all, the objective of any external revision shouldn't be to shame or degrade the reputation of something, but to communicate useful information to others, be it positive or negative; if there is a malicious intent behind the analysis, usually a consequence of not being able to connect with the creation, it necessarily implies that the evaluator wasn't the type of person fit to relate to the content, thus their opinion is inconsequential to the better qualities of the artwork, which are its redeeming qualities (if there are, which if it isn't an amateur's work, it usually has them). Keep in mind that, as I said earlier, this refers to analyzing art, which means meaningfully emotional experiences: we are judging the perceived experience, not the technical qualities (not that one can't comment on both, but doing so on the crafting details has nothing to do with the creation as art, because it doesn't speak of the experience's contexts, and it requires a whole different set of knowledge).

Having seen that oneself is strongly responsible for the acquired experience, it only makes sense that any critique includes or facilitates access to understanding the broader strokes of the person delivering it. The first piece of information that should be provided is one's Art Sublime. While it is unlikely we can accurately transmit the intakes that such creations have generated, we at least give a generalist understanding of what creations we know about, and what is our context to judge, especially if we can exemplify the cases that influenced our tastes the most, and why.

The following would be to explain the elements that we are more driven towards, in order to define what moves our emotional compass, which will dictate the kind of media we enjoy (for example, some people care a lot about how a creation uses the tools its media has, independently of how satisfying is the creation by itself). We should also complement such information with personality traits that we see affecting our judgment.

All of those require a previous step of self-examination from the critic, and one that maybe can't be taken at the moment, but which is desirable at the long run to describe how we reach meaningful emotionality. I dare to say that this is an imperative part of the process, because it is well-known how personal taste shapes art perception, thus any critique must back the ideas up with the lens that examines them; otherwise, any communicated information has a highly misleading potential.

Lastly, and entering a more case-by-case approach, although it also has a value for being specified at a general level, what is the analysis' intent. This is similar to what we are naturally allured by in an artwork, but it doesn't have to correlate (one might be very enticed by visuals or authorship, but want to do more technical reviews, or commenting on the entertainment value of a creation as an artwork), since this relates more to why the author is analyzing, for what purpose, and why some elements might be given more voice than others without an apparent reason.

A key part of defining the intent is clarifying whether we will be referring to the artwork in a media context, or by itself. For example, imagine an artwork which has a fragment of its value deeply tied to the author having consumed another artwork previously. Depending on the kind of value we want to comment on, we should include such information. It is most advisable when we are making a personal judgment, because it's not about the artwork, but our experience with it, implying we aren't judging quality, but how the creation's elements stroke us. Inversely, if we don't contextualize the analyzed subject within our Art Sublime, we will be discarding personal information, because not only it affects our tastes and awareness, but it also functions as a conditioner of perspective, for better or worse.

On the practice of analysis itself, I find the most important quality to be humbleness. After being in contact with various critic communities myself, it is clear to me that we won't be able to ever fully grasp the subtleties of greatly deep creations. While it is useful to judge commonly known elements of

meaningful emotionality (meaning, emotionality, technical style...), the expansive nature of art implies that new things will pop out, things we won't be looking out for, or that will be presented in new ways. Innovation is a tricky factor, because we might be seeing it in front of our eyes, and consider it a failed attempt at something well-known, when, in fact, it strived to differentiate itself. It can be that we dislike it at first, but after seeing it replicated by other creations, we come to accept and enjoy the novelty.

It seems obvious to conclude then, that the larger the Art Sublime, the less probable it is that we miss the broader strokes of an artwork, and so, the better point of reference it serves as for our analysis (not that it guarantees "correctness", because we need critical thinking on top of that, not just experience or practice). Even then, things like Dante's *The Divine Comedy's* syntactical structure and mathematical composition will very easily fly under our radars, despite how much value it imbues to the creation.

The best way to confront this problem, in my opinion, is to speak earnestly. Because the act of analysis is intrinsically subjective, as long as we clearly state why our opinions are as they are (even if such statement is that we have no idea why we feel in such a way), we can basically say whatever we want. A critic is just a reference to see if what is being said connects and makes sense to the receiver, and for that we have to provide context about the critic itself. Without the two parts of the puzzle, we lack information, but with both, we can make better assessments on how to consider an opinion, and how it relates to us. In fact, the most important piece of art discussion might just be the recognition from both sides that there aren't creations unworthy of being seen.