

what to want: finding beauty



Let's test our rules...

- HYPOTHETICAL IMPERATIVE: these include
 - rules of skill and
 - counsels of prudence.
- CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE: commands (laws) of morality.
- THE GOLDEN RULE

The Golden Rule: One should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself (positive form) One should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated (negative/prohibitive form): Wat gij niet wilt dat u geschiedt, doe dat ook een ander niet.

The Categorical Imperative in three maxims...

- a person acts morally if his or her conduct would, without condition, be the "right" conduct for any person in similar circumstances (the "First Maxim").
- conduct is "right" if it treats others as ends in themselves and not as means to an end (the "Second Maxim").
- a person acts morally when he or she acts as if his or her conduct was establishing a universal law governing others in similar circumstances (the "Third Maxim").

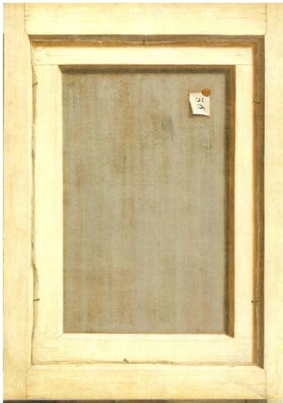
HYPOTHETICAL IMPERATIVE

- rules of skill
 - The end is known and familiar: we have experience in producing or making that quality
 - The quality is not too sensitive to the vagaries of situation
 - Producing it is a matter of acquired skill
- counsels of prudence
 - The end is known only in as an idea
 - Its realisation is sensitive to situation
 - Producing the quality is a matter of applying wisdom

Both types of hypothetical imperatives are called **analytical** because one discovers them from an **analysis** of the goal being willed

so... if freedom is to do what you want...

let's analyse what it is you might want



Remember Spinoza:
Freedom is to choose between (endless) possibilities of which you do not know which is the best and from which point of view...

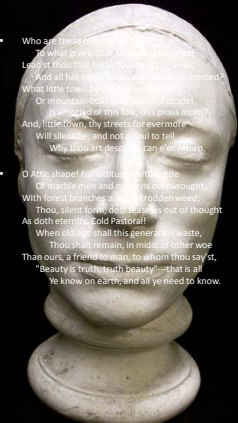
Cornelius Norberetus Gijbrechts, Tromp l'oeil, 1670

- Things you might want...
- I want my building to be beautiful
 - I want form to follow function
 - I want my building to be stable, useful and desirable
 - I want my building to be modern/oldfashioned
 - I want my building to contribute to a fair society
 - I want my building to contribute to a sustainable environment

I want my building to be beautiful


John Keats 1795-1821: ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

- Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loath?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?
- Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit dities of no tone.
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!
- Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
Forever piping songs forever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
Forever warm and still to be enjoyed,
Forever panting, and forever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.



Who are these
The what green hills, who are these
Loud art thou that hast thus beguiled my sense
And art here happy, like sweet birds that sing
What little town, who art thou here to stay
Or mountain-side with silent covelets
As if thy joy, thy place, thy time of day
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silence, and not a soul to tell
Why thy art deserts, can ever return.

O Attic shipp! fair Attic shipp!
Of marble and of brass, are wrought
With forest branches and a coppice wood,
Thou, silent form! dost tease the out of thought
As doth eternity: *Sold Pastoral!*
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to men, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty truth, beauty"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.



O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens
overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of
thought
As doth eternity. Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other
woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou
say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to
know.

.....*

*"The safest general characterization
of the European philosophical tradition
is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato"*
A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 1929

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Middle


The Middle Dialogues

<i>Symposion</i>	is about	Love
<i>Gorgias</i>		Ethical questions
<i>Crito</i> <i>state</i>		Defense of obedience to the Law of the
<i>Phaedo</i>		Theory of Forms, the nature of the soul & Immortality: the death scene of Socrates
<i>Phaedrus</i>		Divine inspiration
<i>Meno</i>		Knowledge/Memory
<i>Hippias Major</i>		The fine/the beautiful
<i>Apologia</i>		Socrates' last days

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Eros

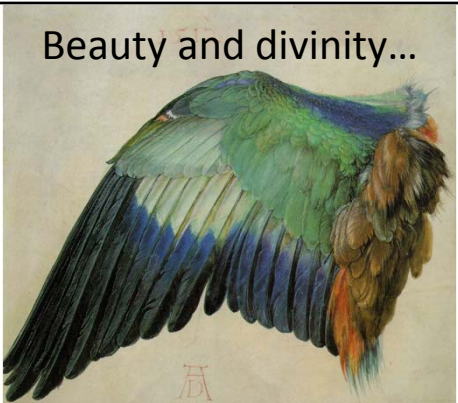
The whole thing comes down to the idea that Diodima, the midwife, describes Eros as a half god. His father was "Contrivance the son of invention" and his mother was "Poverty" who schemes to lie with the drunken god and begets Eros. Eros halfway between man and god spends his whole life struggling through cunning means to possess that what he desires.



Love is the active agent in your struggle to achieve your dreams.

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Beauty and divinity...



Albrecht Dürer

The wing is the corporeal element which is most akin to the divine, and which by nature tends to soar aloft and carry that which gravitates downwards into the upper region, which is the habitation of the gods. The divine is beauty, wisdom, goodness, and the like; and by these the wing of the soul is nourished, and grows apace; but when fed upon evil and foulness and the opposite of good, wastes and falls away.

Plato Phaedrus

Beauty and recall..

the fourth and last kind of madness, [...] is imputed to him who, when he sees the beauty of earth, is transported with the recollection of the true beauty; he would like to fly away, but he cannot; he is like a bird fluttering and looking upward and careless of the world below; and he is therefore thought to be mad. And I have shown this of all inspirations to be the noblest and highest and the offspring of the highest to him who has or shares in it, and that he who loves the beautiful is called a lover because he partakes of it. For, as has been already said, every soul of man has in the way of nature beheld true being; this was the condition of her passing into the form of man. But all souls do not easily recall the things of the other world; they may have seen them for a short time only, or they may have been unfortunate in their earthly lot, and, having had their hearts turned to unrighteousness through some corrupting influence, they may have lost the memory of the holy things which once they saw.

Plato, Phaedrus

The relationship between beauty, wisdom, goodness and truth...



Titian, Sacred and Profane Love, 1515, Rome

beauty, [...] we saw her there shining in company with the celestial forms; and coming to earth we find her here too, shining in clearness through the clearest aperture of sense. For sight is the most piercing of our bodily senses; though not by that is wisdom seen; her loveliness would have been transporting if there had been a visible image of her, and the other ideas, if they had visible counterparts, would be equally lovely.

But this is the privilege of beauty, that being the loveliest she is also the most palpable to sight

Plato, Phaedrus


What happens...

During this process the whole soul is all in a state of ebullition and effervescence, -which may be compared to the irritation and uneasiness in the gums at the time of cutting teeth, -bubbles up, and has a feeling of uneasiness and tickling; but when in like manner the soul is beginning to grow wings, the beauty of the beloved meets her eye and she receives the sensible warm motion of particles which flow towards her, therefore called emotion (imeros), and is refreshed and warmed by them, and then she ceases from her pain with joy. But when she is parted from her beloved and her moisture fails, then the orifices of the passage out of which the wing shoots dry up and close, and intercept the germ of the wing; which, being shut up with the emotion, throbbing as with the pulsations of an artery, pricks the aperture which is nearest, until at length the entire soul is pierced and maddened and pained, and at the recollection of beauty is again delighted. And from both of them together the soul is oppressed at the strangeness of her condition, and is in a great strait and excitement, and in her madness can neither sleep by night nor abide in her place by day. And wherever she thinks that she will behold the beautiful one, thither in her desire she runs. And when she has seen him, and bathed herself in the waters of beauty, her constraint is loosened, and she is refreshed, and has no more pangs and pains; and this is the sweetest of all pleasures at the time, and is the reason why the soul of the lover will never forsake his beautiful one, whom he esteems above all; he has forgotten mother and brethren and companions, and he thinks nothing of the neglect and loss of his property; the rules and proprieties of life, on which he formerly prided himself, he now despises, and is ready to sleep like a servant, wherever he is allowed, as near as he can to his desired one, who is the object of his worship, and the physician who can alone assuage the greatness of his pain. And this state, my dear imaginary youth to whom I am talking, is by men called love

Every one chooses his love from the ranks of beauty according to his character, and this he makes his god, and fashions and adorns as a sort of image which he is to fall down and worship

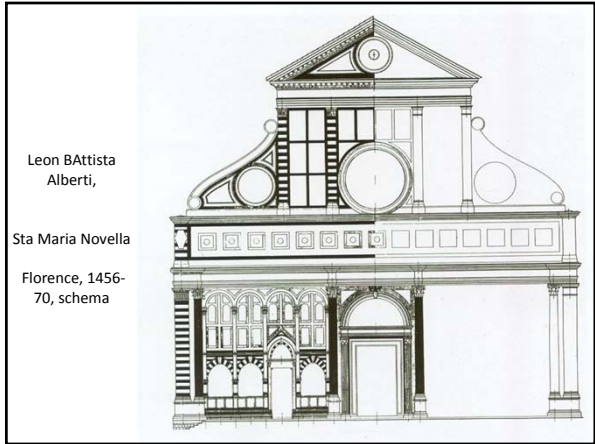
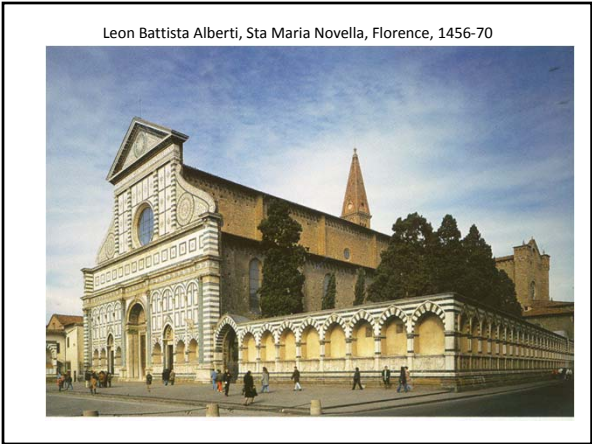


pulchrum et perfectum idem est



Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472)

De re aedificatoria
On The Art of Building



Leon Battista Alberti,
Sta Maria Novella,
Florence, 1456-70, detail



"Beauty is that reasoned harmony of all the parts within a body, so that nothing may be added, taken away, or altered, but for the worse. It is a great and holy matter; all our resources of skill and ingenuity will be taxed in achieving it; and rarely is it granted, even to Nature herself, to produce anything that is entirely complete and perfect in every respect." [Book 6 "On Ornament", Part 2]

Michelangelo Buonarroti, (1475-1564) Pietá (1498-99)

