



Lonergan on the Edge 2015

On Being Beautiful

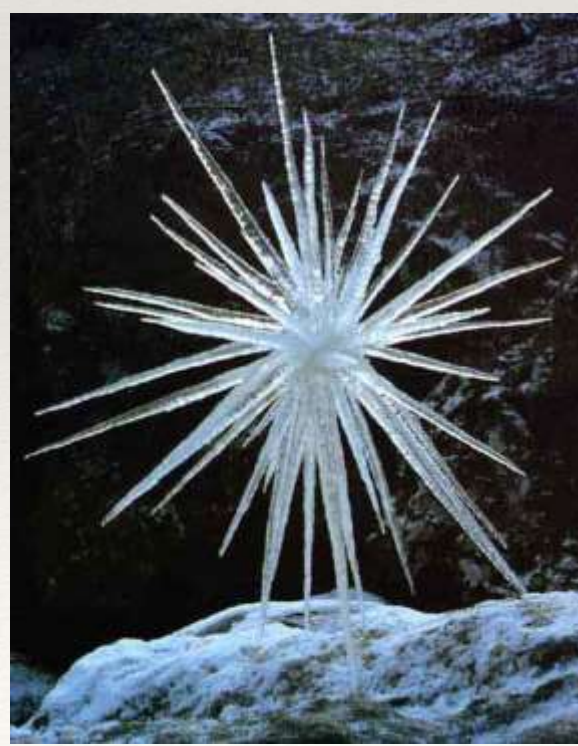
Samuel Ward Granger

Beauty and Agency

“Beauty flashes like a beauty-making (κ λλο οιούς)
ray of primal light that causes harmony
(υ ρμο ί ς) and splendor (γλ ί ς) in everything ...
for beauty is the cause of harmony (ρμογ ί),
friendship (ιλί ι) and communion (κοινωνί ι).”

–Dionysius the Aeropagite
Divine Names IV, 7 701C, 704A

Beauty and Agency



Dramatic Artistry

“Not only, then, is man capable of aesthetic liberation and artistic creativity, but *his first work of art is his own living*. The fair, the beautiful, the admirable is embodied by man in his own body and actions before it is given a still freer realization in writing and sculpture, in music and poetry. *Style is in the man before it appears in the artistic product.*”

–Bernard Lonergan, S. J.

Insight 210-211; emphasis mine.

Dramatic Artistry



It is said that anyone over thirty is responsible for his face, and that is one way of putting it.

–Bernard Lonergan, S. J.

Understanding and Being, Lecture 4, 89.

Dramatic Artistry

*The greatest creative action is living, because living is the “art of arts”
whereby we create our very selves.*



On Being Beautiful

My Claim

Beauty offers the strongest resources from which to make an ethic which can account for the *creative responsibility* of human living.





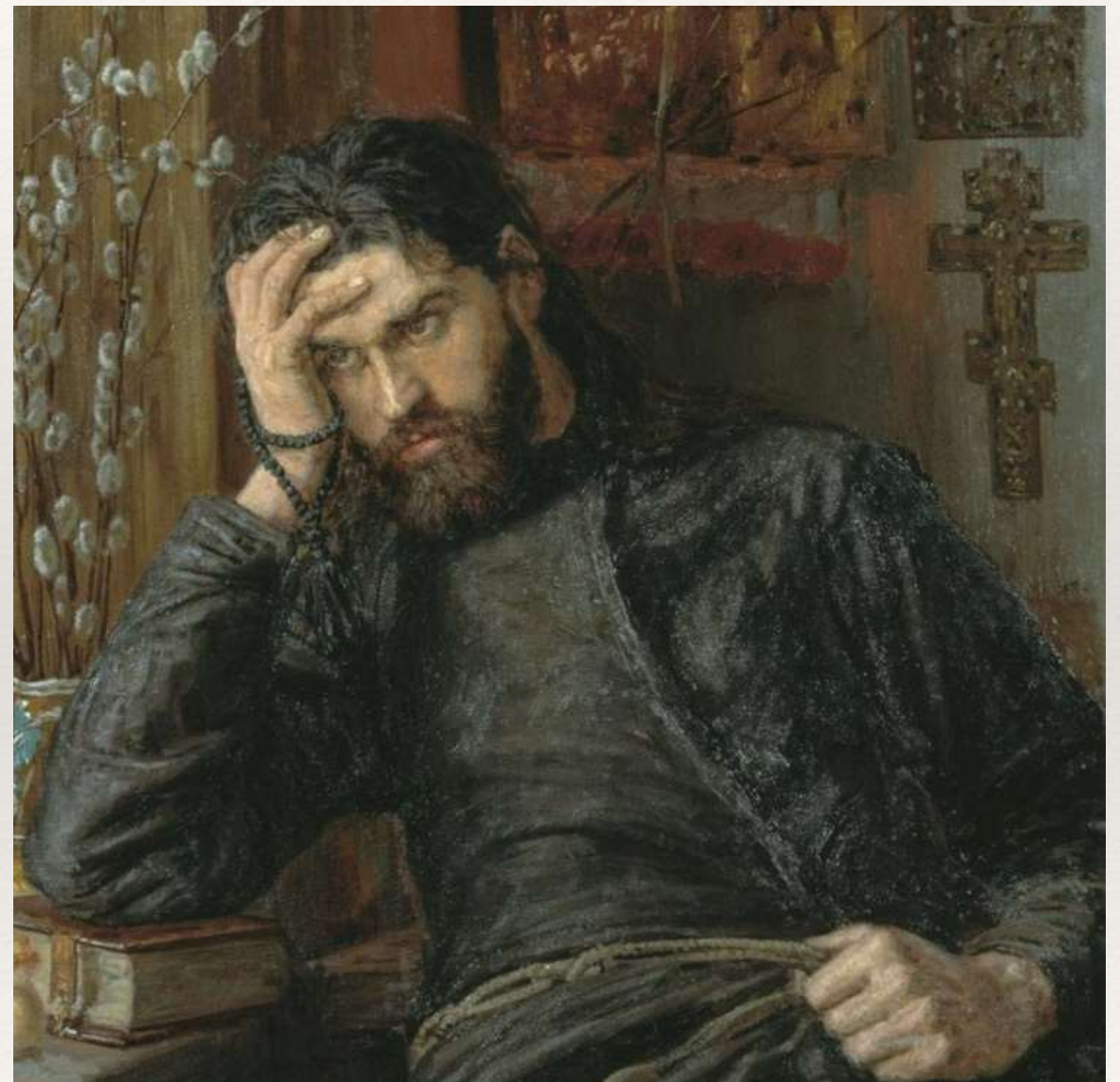
On Being Beautiful

My Aim

- ❖ Highlight the inherently interpersonal or dramatic character of art.
- ❖ Highlight the role of beauty and art in Lonergan's cognitive schema.
- ❖ Outline the criteria or precepts which structure an ethic of beauty

Let's Russian Two Things

- ❖ The Subject and Object:
Man and his World
- ❖ Subjectification, objectification,
and the art of economic activity
(Bulgakov)
- ❖ Beauty is love as an object of
contemplation (Florensky)



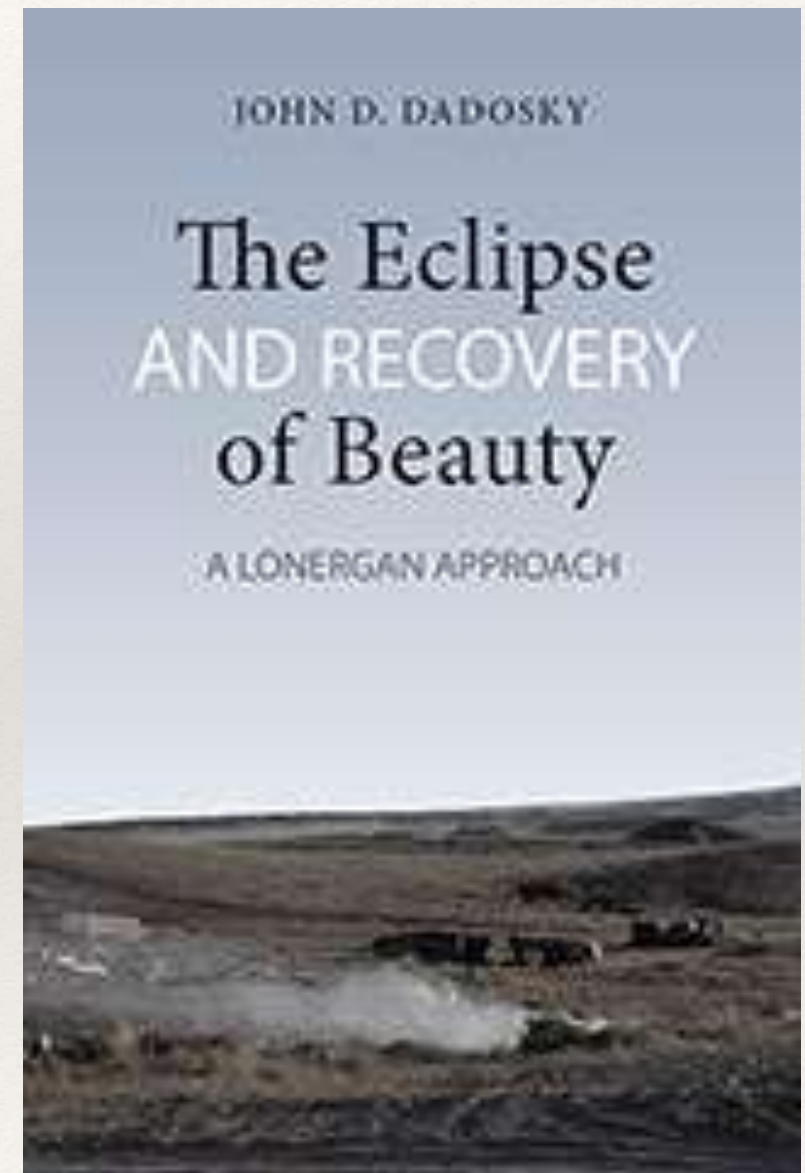
Christopher Alexander



- ❖ Building is ultimately about creating things that live
- ❖ The artist is the *medium* for resolving the inherent tensions of his *medium*
- ❖ “It is the nature of matter, that it is soaked through with self or ‘I.’”

Beauty in Lonergan

- ❖ How does Beauty relate to:
 - ❖ Our attention?
 - ❖ Our intelligence?
 - ❖ Our reason?
 - ❖ Our responsibility?



Experience

- ❖ How does Beauty relate to our attention?
- ❖ There's nothing in the mind that isn't first in the senses (AQ).
- ❖ Art is the “objectification of a purely experiential pattern of experience” (*Topics in Education* 211)
- ❖ *The aesthetic pattern of experience* liberates us from instrumentalizing *ourselves* and the erosion and exhaustion of meaning.
- ❖ Elemental meaning precedes division of the subject and object.

Understanding

- ❖ How does Beauty relate to our intelligence?
- ❖ Insights give form of the phantasm, which relies on images.
- ❖ Aesthetic values are a “realization of the intelligible in the sensible” (*TE*)
- ❖ “Beauty relates to the cognitive faculty; for *beautiful things are those which please when seen...* and even sense is a sort of reason” (*STI*, 5, 4 ad 1)

Judgment

- ❖ How does Beauty relate to our reason?
- ❖ Since Beauty is the form of the True and the Good, it can account for both judgments of fact and judgments of value.
- ❖ “Aesthetic value apprehends the human good on the profoundest level” (*TE* 37).

Decision

- ❖ How does Beauty relate to our responsibility?
- ❖ Art is “an expression of the human subject outside the limits of adequate intellectual formation and appraisal” (*IN*208).
- ❖ “The validation of the artistic idea is the artistic deed. The artist establishes his insights not by verification, but by skillfully embodying them ...” (IN 208).
- ❖ Acts of justice are creative attempts to restore beauty (Scarry).

From Authenticity to Beauty

- ❖ *The transcendental method will help you become attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible.*
- ❖ *The transcendental precepts answer the question How? but not as much the question Why?*
- ❖ *What precepts would help us “be beautiful”?*

Precepts of Beauty

- ❖ Be Whole
- ❖ Be Harmonious
- ❖ Be Radiant

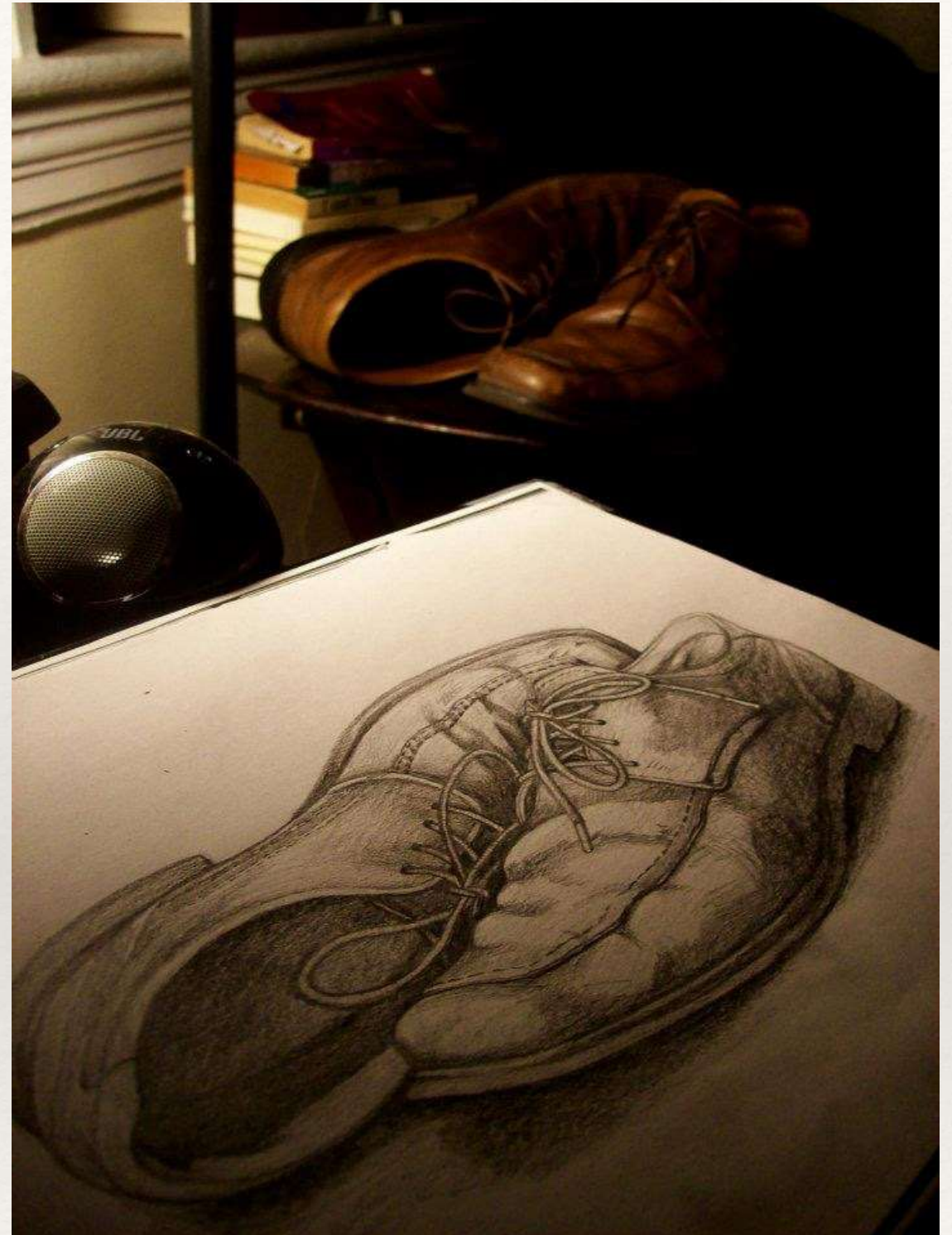


See *Summa Theologiæ* I, 39,
8

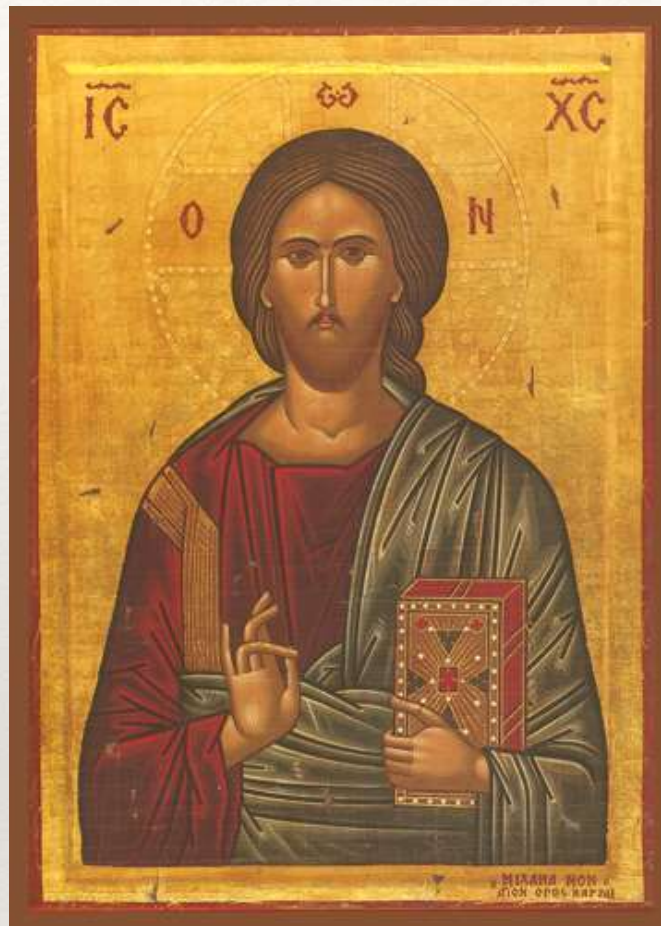
The first step in the creative process

Let us attend

- ❖ Attention is a creative act
- ❖ Attention is a collaborative act



ωρί κ' ἔω ις



“Species or beauty has a likeness to the property of the Son.”

Aquinas *Summa Theologiæ* I, 39, 8

Beauty Beckons

“Beauty ‘bids’ [κ λούv] all things to itself
(whence it is called ‘beauty’ [κάλλος])
and gathers everything into itself.”

–Dionysius the Aeropagite
The Divine Names IV, 7 701D

How will you respond?