

## **Painter of modern life.**

### **Charles Baudelaire**

#### **Beauty, Fashion, and Happiness:**

##### **1. Introduction :**

The first essay from Charles Baudelaire's book **"The painter of modern life"** is about beauty , fashion and happiness. In this essay author firstly state about the people who just see the glance of art ( beauty ) and think that they have seen everything. But actually art doesn't come to halt by just viewing the popular artists. Valuable art may also come from minor artists, that we should not neglect because that beauty comes from morals , cultures and its historical context.

##### **2. Art must represent present:**

Charles Baudelaire think that art must not represent the past scenarios , because we derive pleasure from present events and notion, from things that represent us not something that represent people and time we are less familiar with. We achieve more pleasure from art that represent present, not only because of its beauty but because it is in present.

##### **3. Beauty :**

Charles Baudelaire state that beauty is always and inevitably of a double composition. Beauty is made up of two elements.

- An eternal Invariable element, whose quantity is difficult to determine. (Aesthetic value)
- A relative, circumstantial element, that represent age, fashion, morals and emotions. ( Historical context)

Beauty doesn't serves its purpose faithfully if either of these element is missing. Charles Baudelaire consider eternal element as the soul of art and variable element as the body of art.

##### **4. Fashion:**

Fashion represent the sketch of manners of age. The art must represent the moral, culture and tradition of age. It represent

- Current events,
- Society we live in,
- And morals we have.

The aesthetic value of beauty might get lost if not expressed with respect to the fashion. According to author if our standards of beauty derive exclusively from the spiritual or eternal element, development cannot take place; hence, what Baudelaire calls the circumstantial element, must play a very important role in the growth of art and our perception of beauty.

##### **5. Happiness:**

Charles Baudelaire states happiness by the quotation of Stendhal that is

**" Beauty is nothing else but a promise of happiness"**

This statement explains author's point of view very clearly, as it gives beauty just enough subjectivity as needed without making it infinite. While on the other hand maintain its merit of making decided break with the academic error.

### **The Artist, Man of the World, Man of the Crowd, and Child:**

#### **1. Introduction:**

Charles Baudelaire's essay "**The artist, Man of the world, Man of the crowd, and Child**" is written about a painter and Illustrator whose name is 'Constantine Guy'. Baudelaire describes his character as a self-taught artist. Constantine Guy's identity is kept anonymous and he is referred as **Monsieur G.** In essay, by drawing out the characteristics of the artist's

#### **2. Nature and actions of Monsieur G. includes:**

- Originality
- Modesty
- A lack of need for approval
- A desire to be anonymous
- A lack of ulterior motives
- And an obsession with a world of images.

#### **3. Monsieur G. as unique Artist:**

M.G. does not sign his pieces with his name. The author claims that the artist's nature is clearly readable in his works and even without the signature you can tell it was created by M.G. because

**"all his works are signed with his dazzling soul."**

M.G.'s knowledge of materials and capability of art making are referred to as being a gift.

#### **4. Monsieur G. as a Child:**

The author vividly describes that the mainspring of Monsieur G.'s genius character is curiosity.

He also say that the experience of

- Curiosity
- Interest
- And passion,

at these extremes, is relatable to being a child—one distracted by the wonder of every single element as being new and exciting. Basically, Baudelaire is depicting the idea of artist as super sensory sensitive. However, M.G. does not have the mentality of a child. He is a hybrid of childlike naivety mixed with a mature sensibility, making him man of a genius.

#### **5. Monsieur G. as man of the world:**

M.G. holds an elitist position as man of the world, but Baudelaire also notes the downside to this position concerning the artist's capacity of feeling.

Just as Monsieur G. can be taken to ecstasy through observation, he can also feel the worst of all pains. Baudelaire's example is a quote by M.G. himself:

**“any man who is not weighed down with a sorrow so searching as to touch all his faculties, and who is bored in the midst of the crowd, is a fool! A fool! and I despise him!”**

Here, the author uses the theme of melancholia belonging to the genius; his gift is both a positive and negative bestowment received by Fate.

#### **6. Monsieur G. as man of crowd:**

At the end Charles Baudelaire refers to Monsieur G. as man of crowd because that is where he belongs truly.

Charles Baudelaire call him a passionate spectator, a lover of life who makes the whole world his family.

He calls him lover of life because,

- He can be away from home and yet to feel himself everywhere at home.
- He can be in the centre of world and yet remain hidden from the world.

He takes pleasure in his independence, passion and impartial nature.

#### **7. Monsieur G. is Gifted with sight and power of expression:**

Charles Baudelaire state that few men are blessed with the gift of sight and fewer with the power of expression. But Monsieur G. Is blessed with both gifts, to whom he use at full swing.

When the whole world is asleep Monsieur G. Is transforming the images in his mind to the paper by using water colours. And these paintings are much more realistic, beautiful and natural in their own uniqueness.

#### **8. Conclusion:**

Baudelaire closes by maintaining the myth and the need of the artist in culture. He describes the magical creation process as an activity that produces objects inevitably carrying the essence and soul of their creator. He celebrates a mature naivety towards the present, and condemns borrowing too much from the past. Baudelaire is proposing an idea of man and a way of reacting to the world that will eventually lead to some progression—a man forever in search of modernity.