

Is Beauty in the Eye of the Beholder?

It is often said that beauty is “in the eye of the beholder,” I think that this means that what one person finds beautiful might not appeal to someone else at all. It is a simple phrase, but it raises a really interesting question: is beauty purely subjective and personal, or are there some things that most people would naturally find beautiful?

On one hand, beauty clearly depends on personal taste. We have all grown up with different cultures, experiences, memories, and preferences, all of which shape what we notice and value. A song, a painting, a face, a room, or a landscape might feel beautiful to one person because it reminds them of something meaningful, it resonates with them, while someone else may feel nothing much at all. In that sense, beauty is not just about the object itself; it is also about the person looking at it.

On the other hand, it seems that beauty is not completely random. Across many cultures, people often admire colour, harmony, healthy-looking features, skilled design, or natural scenes such as sunsets and mountains. These shared reactions suggest that there may be some common patterns in what humans tend to find attractive or impressive, even if we do not all agree on every detail.

Perhaps a pragmatic answer, (or is it a cop out?) is that beauty is **partly** in the eye of the beholder. Personal taste matters a lot, but it works alongside wider influences such as culture, fashion, biology, and social expectations. What counts as beautiful can change over time; changes in fashion over the years are an example of this. This makes beauty feel less like a fixed rule and more like a reflection of the relationship between the world and the person experiencing it.

In conclusion, beauty is not the same for everyone, and that is probably what makes it interesting. We may share some common ideas about beauty, but our personal, social and cultural experiences give those ideas different meanings. So, while beauty may not be entirely in the eye of the beholder, the beholder definitely plays a big part.

Then there is, of course, the matter of Donald Trump’s bizarre White House interior design choices - but perhaps it is best not to dwell on that issue!

Barbara

