

***Art for a New Consciousness,
Art for a New Humanity***

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"In the beginning there was Word, Word was with God, Word was God." Words are the carrier of meanings, hence in some religions words are the primary representation of the divine. Yet, the universal power of an image rises far above all words, all verbal constructs of God. Isn't it true that "an image is worth a thousand words?" Should not images have immensely greater divine power? Surprisingly, many do not. We must wonder. Why visual "arts" with immense superiority over any words, have gradually lost much of their admired power and brilliance. Why they have descended to a great fall? In search for an answer, first consider a simple question in the tradition of Socrates' dialogue; can anyone understand "fast" without knowing "slow?" In parallel, ask, can we understand the meaning of "art", without knowing its opposite? It is truly astonishing that there is no word for the opposite of "art" to objectively define "art." A look at the ancient history can shed light. During the kingdom of Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Achaemenian Dynasty, 500 BC, "art" was defined as **effective goodness**. Then the opposite of art was clear. The absence of a transparent definition for "art" and its opposite in Western language has opened the floodgate of opportunity for *tastemakers* to create and exploit a multi-billion dollar "business" in the name of "art," for what they are not. Consequently, creation has been replaced with expression, greatness with largeness, mastery with newness, and beauty with hideousness. All, the opposites of "art." These ambiguities have brought upon us "the ugliness of so much bacchanalian and barbaric display that presently passes for art," as noted by late Professor **Albert Boime**, the foremost social art historian of our time. In the last of his 26 books, Boime, (2008)

resolutely called a search for an “**Art for a New Consciousness, Art for a New Humanity,**” a call to elevate our collective consciousness to ascend from “darkness” and celebrate *only* the creativity that embodies beauty and mastery in *Art*. In that spirit, I concur with Bertolt Brecht, the German scholar, “**Art is not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it,**” and I propose: “**Art** is the only form of creation that in harmony with universal values, emanates positive energy and objectively beautifies life. Anything less, is a limited personal expression—**Personart.**”



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