

Aesthetics in Architecture

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Abstract: *Aesthetics is the study of beauty and taste, whether in the form of the comic, the tragic, or the sublime. It's meaning into gratification of the senses or sensuous delight. The best designs usually look good - aesthetically pleasing. Introduced into the philosophical lexicon during the Eighteenth Century, the term 'aesthetic' has come to be used to designate, among other things, a kind of object, a kind of judgment, a kind of attitude, a kind of experience, and a kind of value. This means that Aesthetics is a theory of the senses that investigates how people approach the world through their senses, either to gather knowledge about it or to enjoy and find pleasure in it. The subject also has a new relevance in the contemporary media, which is more filled with messages, information and sensory impressions than ever before. In the context of Architecture, term aesthetics to buildings and related architectural structures is visual design contribute to the shape, texture, collotype of material, symmetry and simplicity of the repeated pattern used in the design and design elements such as axis, line, landform, horizontal and vertical planes, texture, and scale to create variations of space and form. This paper explores the parameters of aesthetics and its relevance with changing time and context. In fact, it can be argued that all aesthetic judgments are culturally conditioned to some extent, and can change over time. The paper also reviews different forms of Aesthetics in art, music, performing art, literature along with understanding of Aesthetics in Indian Context.*

Keywords: Aesthetics, Contemporary media, Design, Architecture, Visual Design, Design Elements, Parameters of Aesthetics..

Introduction

Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and appreciation of art, beauty and good taste. It has also been defined as "critical reflection on art, culture and nature".

The word "aesthetics" derives from the Greek "aisthetikos", meaning "of sense perception". Along with Ethics, aesthetics is part of axiology (the study of values and value judgements).

A set of principles underlying the work of a particular artist or artistic movement in Late 18th The sense 'concerned with beauty' was coined in German in the mid 18th century and adopted into English in the early 19th century, but its use was controversial until much later in the century. (ref: English Oxford Dictionaries)

History of Aesthetics

The Ancient Greek philosophers initially felt that aesthetically appealing objects were beautiful in and of themselves.

Aristotle found that the universal elements of beauty were order, symmetry and definiteness and Plato felt that beautiful objects incorporated proportion, harmony and unity among their parts.

According to Islam, human works of art are inherently flawed compared to the work of Allah, and to attempt to depict in a realistic form any animal or person is insolence to Allah. This has had the effect of narrowing the field of Muslim artistic possibility to such forms as mosaics, calligraphy, architecture and geometric and floral patterns whereas, Indian art evolved with an emphasis on inducing special spiritual or philosophical states in the audience, or with representing them symbolically. As long as go as the 5th Century B.C., Chinese philosophers were already arguing about aesthetics. Confucius (551 - 479 B.C.) emphasized the role of the arts and humanities (especially music and poetry) in broadening human nature. His near contemporary Mozi (470 - 391 B.C.), however, argued that music and fine arts were classist and wasteful, benefiting the rich but not the common people.

On the other hand, Western Medieval art (at least until the revival of classical ideals during the Renaissance) was highly religious in focus, and was typically funded by the Church, powerful ecclesiastical individuals, or wealthy secular patrons. A religiously uplifting message was considered more important than figurative accuracy or inspired composition. The skills of the artisan were considered gifts from God for the sole purpose of disclosing God to mankind.

With the shift in Western philosophy from the late 17th Century onwards, German and British thinkers in particular emphasized beauty as the key component of art and of the aesthetic experience, and saw art as necessarily aiming at beauty. For Friedrich Schiller (1759 - 1805), aesthetic appreciation of beauty is the most perfect reconciliation of the sensual and rational parts of human nature. Hegel held that art is the first stage in which the absolute spirit is immediately manifest to sense-perception, and is thus an objective rather than a subjective revelation of beauty. For Schopenhauer, aesthetic contemplation of beauty is the most free that the pure intellect can be from the dictates of will.

British Intuitionists like the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury (1671 - 1713) claimed that beauty is just the sensory equivalent of moral goodness. More analytic theorists like Lord Kames (1696 - 1782), William Hogarth (1697 - 1764) and Edmund Burke hoped to reduce beauty to some list of attributes, while others like James Mill (1773 - 1836) and Herbert Spencer (1820 - 1903) strove to link beauty to some scientific theory of psychology or biology.

Aesthetic Universals

The contemporary American philosopher Denis Dutton (1944 -) has identified seven universal signatures in human aesthetics. Although there are possible exceptions and objections to many of them, they represent a useful starting point for the consideration of aesthetics:

Expertise or Virtuosity (technical artistic skills are cultivated, recognized and admired)

Non-Utilitarian Pleasure (people enjoy art for art's sake, and don't demand practical value of it) Style (artistic objects and performances satisfy rules of composition that place them in recognizable styles) Criticism (people make a point of judging, appreciating and interpreting works of art) Imitation (with a few important exceptions (e.g. music, abstract painting), works of art simulate experiences of the world) Special Focus (art is set aside from ordinary life and made a dramatic focus of experience) Imagination (artists and their audiences entertain hypothetical worlds in the theatre of the imagination)

According to Immanuel Kant, beauty is objective and universal (i.e. certain things are beautiful to everyone). But there is a second concept involved in a viewer's interpretation of beauty, that of taste, which is subjective and varies according to class, cultural background and education.

In fact, it can be argued that all aesthetic judgements are culturally conditioned to some extent, and can change over time (e.g. Victorians in Britain often saw African sculpture as ugly, but just a few decades later, Edwardian audiences saw the same sculptures as being beautiful).

Judgments of aesthetic value can also become linked to judgements of economic, political or moral value (e.g. we might judge an expensive car to be beautiful partly because it is desirable as a status symbol, or we might judge it to be repulsive partly because it signifies for us over-consumption and offends our political or moral values.)

The subject also has a new relevance in the contemporary media and interactive design, which is more filled with messages, information and sensory impressions than ever before. Aesthetic tools are used by to improve communication aspect. When you consider application design and development, how do you think of visual design? Is it a skin that adds some value—a layer on top of the core functionality? Or is this beauty something more? Aesthetics makes a difference not just blindly but on purpose. It reaches back to the sender.

One of the most widely cited studies associated with the “attractive things work better” argument is cited in the opening chapter of Donald Norman’s 2003 book *Emotional Design*.

Another study, “The Influence of Design Aesthetics in Usability Testing: Effects on User

Performance and Perceived Usability,” (Sonderegger and Sauer, 2009), presented adolescents with one of two mobile

phones, an attractive one, and one less so. The conclusion was -

“The visual appearance of the phone had a positive effect on performance, leading to reduced task completion times for the attractive model.”

Not only do aesthetics affect perceived usability, they also influence actual performance.

What Is Architecture?

"Architecture is an art bridging the humanities and the sciences," says American architect Steven Holl (b. 1947). "We work bone-deep in Art—drawing lines between sculpture, poetry, music and science that coalesce in Architecture."

.....the profession of designing buildings, open areas, communities, and other artificial constructions and environments, usually with some regard to aesthetic effect. Architecture often includes design or selection of furnishings and decorations, supervision of construction work, and the examination, restoration, or remodelling of existing buildings.

Depending on the context, architecture can refer to any man-made building or structure, like a tower or monument; a man-made building or structure that is important, large, or highly creative; a carefully designed object, such as a chair, a spoon, or a tea kettle; a design for a large area such as a city, town, park, or landscape; the art or science of designing and building buildings, structures, objects, and outdoor spaces; a building style, method, or process; a plan for organizing space; elegant engineering; the planned design of any kind of system; a systematic arrangement of information or ideas; the flow of information on a Web page.

The word architecture can have many meanings. Architecture can be both an art and a science, a process and a result, and both an idea and a reality. People often use the words "architecture" and "design" interchangeably, which naturally broadens the definition of architecture. If you can "design" your own career goals, aren't you the architect of your own life? It seems there are no easy answers, so we explore and debate the many definitions of architecture, design, and what architects and social scientists call "the built environment."

The adjective architectural can describe anything related to architecture and building design. Examples are abundant, including architectural drawings; architectural design; architectural styles; architectural modelling; architectural details; architectural engineering; architectural software; architectural historian or architectural history; architectural research; architectural evolution; architectural studies; architectural heritage; architectural traditions; architectural antiquities and architectural salvage; architectural lighting; architectural products; architectural investigation.

Generally, Architecture is the design of houses, using the word 'house' in a broad sense so a house is anything built for living, working, entertaining, celebrating, selling, keeping holy or exercising power. Architecture also has to do with urban planning, that is the relationship between houses and the space around the houses, such as squares, parks and gardens also the interior spaces of house along with walls, furniture etc. Also,

the word architectural can describe objects that have a strong shape or beautiful lines—an architectural vase; an architectural sculpture; an architectural rock formation; architectural drapery

A house or structure has a physical identity, which is the unity of its form and function which need to go hand in hand. Function and its limitations prevent Architect from behaving like an Artist. Traditionally, architecture is considered one of the fine arts. This however this classification goes back to the time when art become separate and pure and the difference between the art and architecture become clear. Architecture is not art, but applied art. A house creates a physical limitation of space with a view towards a social unfolding of space. By setting limitations in space, structure is created in space. Strictly speaking architecture requires a physical object – a built form. Even though architecture is applied art the difference between pure and applied is restricted in architecture.

Aesthesis Process

We consider Architecture as communication and build structures, buildings and surroundings makes an impression on users which creates a common sounding board for the special experiences of the user. The meaning comes from the buildings, sensory impression and its articulations.

In the early 1900s, “form follows function” became the mantra of modern architecture.

Frank Lloyd Wright changed this phrase to “form and function should be one, joined in a spiritual union,” using nature as the best example of this integration. The more we learn about people, and how our brains process information, the more we see the truth of that phrase: form and function aren't separate. If form exists independently of function, and we can treat aesthetics and function as two separate elements, then we ignore the evidence that beauty is much more than decoration. Our brains can't help but agree. Norman offers another explanation: we want those things that we find pleasing to succeed. We're more tolerant of problems in things that we find attractive. How many of us have tolerated faults in a person due to their attractiveness? You don't have to answer that question.

"The land is the simplest form of architecture," wrote American architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959), implying that the built environment is not exclusively man-made. If true, are the birds and the bees and all builders of natural habitats considered architects—and are their structures architecture?

Architect and journalist Roger K. Lewis (b. 1941) writes that societies tend to value most a structure that "transcends service or functional performance" and that are more than mere buildings. "Great architecture," writes Lewis, "has always represented more than responsible construction or durable shelter. Artfulness of form and artistry of building have long been the dominant standards for measuring the extent to which human made artifacts are transformed from the profane to the sacred."

Frank Lloyd Wright claims that this artistry and beauty can only come from the human spirit. "Mere building may not know 'spirit' at all," Wright wrote in 1937. "And it is well to say that the spirit of the thing is the essential life of that thing because it is truth." To Wright's thinking, a beaver dam, a beehive, and a bird's nest may be beautiful, lower forms of architecture, but the "great fact" is this— "architecture is simply a higher type and expression of nature by way of human nature where human beings are concerned.

The spirit of man enters into all, making of the whole a godlike reflection of himself as creator. When the forms of architecture were limited by materials and construction methods, aesthetic principles were narrowly defined by the successors to Vitruvius. In the modern era, many more forms are possible, and the selection or invention of those forms can give a much wider range of meaning.

Choosing traditional forms is, of course, possible and can follow, or violate the principles of the many styles of architecture which followed Roman classicism. Selection of such a style shows an intention of continuity with the life and buildings of the period selected, and misinterpretation of principles can be seen as exercising bad taste.

Modern architecture proposed a break with stylistic traditions, and invented what have become new ones—some derived from precedent movements like the Bauhaus, others from the work of influential architects like Frank Lloyd Wright, le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe. Others found possibilities in vernacular architecture, construction methods, or abstract, new forms.

The selection of specific forms conveys meaning to us, whatever choice is made. A glass building can, for example, mean transparency and honesty, while an opaque building means privacy and concealment. Tall buildings have always been expressions of power; colorful buildings can mean levity and whimsy. The building's activities can be shown or concealed, as can the means by which the building operates, like structure and mechanical systems.

New developments in architectural tools including sustainable design, the emergence of building science, and building information modelling (BIM) all lead to new insights in the design and construction processes with aesthetics often revisited. As necessity is the origin of invention, scarcity can also inspire. With a lack of quality large timbers for framing, coupled with rising costs for steel and concrete, new production techniques developed around laminating timbers together in large plates. The cross-laminated timber (CLT) framing system as it is known increased in both popularity and acceptance as an alternative to traditional methods of construction. The impact on aesthetics can be seen in the large expanse and planes of wood layers that convey strength and delight.

Contemporary culture advocates diversity of styles, even in cases of historic preservation. It also encourages the development of new architectural languages. In response to this openness, designers agree that aesthetically successful architecture comes from an integrated approach. By correctly formulating a project's purpose, seeking inspiration in

programmatic requirements, and engaging in team-wide design reviews, an architect most effectively arrives at a solution that is as delightful as it is cost-effective, secure/safe, sustainable, accessible, and functional/operational. In much of contemporary architecture, the notion of expressive exteriors becomes tempered by new materials such as: high performing glass that conveys literal openness in an age of digital communication via the Internet or alternative roofing technologies that can extend the liveable areas to the top of buildings proving a green space that can hold storm water and offer new amenities.

Good architecture achieves useful, humane, and economical results, and a building expresses those qualities regardless of style. A fully integrated building promises to be durable in way that Vitruvius may not have envisioned: It will inspire a community to find ways to use it even when the original program is no longer relevant. With an eye to integration, an architect makes aesthetic decisions in full collaboration with the client, building users, other consultants, and the public. Therefore it is important for the client and building users to be well informed about the possibilities of architecture. They can assist the design team in conceiving a building that meets the most needs.

When a structure has to fulfil the ambitions of an architect, it becomes the battle that includes the entire world past, present, future. This conflict the engine of architectural evaluation which takes place as a struggle to improve functions and reinforce impressions with new materials and techniques, new dimensions and means, so boundaries are broken and complexity is tested side by side with geometric wildness and outrage simplicity. The boundary between architecture and art vibrates.

Form and functions can vary in its own way opens up extremes like mad cap Fashion creators.

Their purpose is not to provide every day forms but to move the boundaries for what is possible. In the extreme in which use is taken out of consideration , architecture become disinterested like art- not because no one interested in it, but because its interest has to do with forms, while the issue of dwelling is ignored.

When a structure aims at aesthetic perfection, it ends up being a social building. The other extreme is that form is subordinated to function. Architects can optimise functions as the distribution of the floor areas and the quantity of light, so the form “follows” as a best functional solution. By focusing on the essence of function and removing everything unessential, this architecture leads to minimalist, purist solutions in which buildings are made sublime with purely geometric figures, slender still skeletons and smooth surfaces preferably of glass. The ideal is the feather light, almost floating building, which is at once almost invisible and at the same time sharply decline from its environment. Since only function is important, the idioms must be purified of everything this cannot be derived from function and dismiss as external decoration or aesthetic.

Le Corbusier spoke of buildings that are built from inside out and let geometry becomes a solution to the problem of

modern architecture, guided by the powerful sense of order. Correspondingly Walter Gropius spoke of a house that built itself, when every professional group went out of its way to makes it particular contribution.

New form of Aesthesis

Purification does not mean that a structure defies an environment. When architects today claims that architecture essentially simplifies articulates, makes clear so you reach the inner essence of the theme , this goes hand in hand with a desire to harmonise new buildings with their old environment open up and new form of Aesthesis as Adaptive Architecture.

Adaptive Architecture is a multi-disciplinary field concerned with buildings that are designed to adapt to their environments, their inhabitants and objects as well as those buildings that are entirely driven by internal data. Because of its multi-disciplinary nature, developments across Architecture, Computer Science, the Social Sciences, Urban Planning and the Arts can appear disjointed. Aesthetics is a commodity often and expensive one. When aesthetics is separated from knowledge and norms, the question arises about its dark side. If aesthetic use contrary to knowledge and norms, they can be used to seduce and corrupt. If you try to irradiate the aesthetic dimension from architecture, architecture dissolves into nothing. With aesthetics you can build in attraction – or the opposite. Therefore the use of aesthetic is as old as human beings and it is just as dangerous, unavoidable and just as elementary as earth, water, air, and fire.

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