

MAXIMIZE BEAUTY

As an artist, the one thing I consider about life in the modern world is that it lacks beauty. I find that beauty is missing because we prioritize **productivity**. With productivity being the priority, you see a flattening of all the surfaces around you. Just look at the architecture—everything is smoothed out: glass windows, sterile office buildings, and “luxury” condo buildings that look like beehives.

The obvious reason for all of this is because it’s probably a lot cheaper and faster to build. One insane thing I realized is the tunnel under City Hall was closed for like six months. And over the course of that time, they repaved the floor—but they didn’t even get the proportions right. It’s like an inch or two off the ground and there’s a drop at the end. It just doesn’t feel right.

Also, apparently the Horticulture Center in Fairmount Park was destroyed in the 1950s because it wasn’t possible for the people to upkeep it? This makes no sense to me. If you look at any of the historic photographs of the structure, it was absolutely incredible—a masterpiece of beauty. But the reasoning behind destroying it, from what I found, was the fact that it wasn’t something we had the ability to maintain. So we just knock it down?

Seems like there’s a trend toward **flattening society**, stripping everything down to a smooth surface—like the glass tablet or the iPhone in your hand. With everything looking the same, everything becomes mediocre. And nothing is extraordinary or beautiful anymore.

Seeing One’s True Nature

There’s this concept in Zen Buddhism called *Kenshō* and *Satori*. The idea with *Kenshō* is having this initial sense of awakening or realization of one’s true nature—even about life in general or the world around.

I remember a few years ago, looking out my window at all of the architecture and all this new stuff that's been built over the years, thinking to myself: it just looks like a gigantic prison. All of the office buildings looked like beehives, and everyone looked like prisoners going into their cells.

I started to question the norms behind our lifestyle decisions in the modern world. It felt like we're living in some sort of metaphorical Matrix, where we've all subconsciously agreed upon a piece of paper controlling our behavior patterns—for when we wake up, go to the bathroom, eat lunch, go to sleep, and repeat.

At that moment, I started to see beyond the surface. I decided I don't want to play that game. I don't want to surround myself with ugliness—indoors, under fluorescent lights, for the rest of my life.

I don't want to surround myself with nothing beautiful. That's the deal for me—it's the lack of beauty. The lack of anything beautiful in front of my eyeballs, in my ears, etc. This is a priority for me.

I seek to maximize beauty.

And so because of this, I decided to work in the park, surrounded by beauty, and then return to the city in the afternoon to practice my street photography.

I don't believe humans are designed to thrive in artificial environments. I actually think this is a complete denial of life itself. I prefer to maximize my time in beautiful, natural environments for 100% of my day—because that's truly where humans are designed to be.

At least the architecture of the old world was beautiful and inspiring—like the Philadelphia Library, the Museum of Art, the Fairmount Water Works, etc. There's a reason we gravitate toward these places. Not only are the structures beautiful, but there's wisdom inside, artwork, and experiences to have.

Showing up to an office, hitting the little bell to go up the elevator shaft, tucking yourself in a corner with a computer, and sitting down all day is uninspiring.

A life with no beauty is not a life worth living.

To Prioritize Beauty, Prioritize Vitality

It's currently 5 AM and I'm walking along the River Trail with my 40-pound weight carrier.

Why?

Because I'm overflowing with vitality.

It's not for self-improvement or even trying to get stronger at this point. I literally feel like I have to exert my force and power from the moment I wake up until the moment I go to sleep because I'm so full of exuberance for life itself.

This exuberance for life derives through **vitality**.

We don't prioritize vitality in the modern world—we prioritize productivity.

But what if I told you that embracing **leisure**, not trying, *not* doing things, *not* chasing self-improvement, is the true path to vitality?

The more you grind, make money, and climb the corporate ladder, the more you inevitably neglect your vitality.

But the more you prioritize your **health**, your **sleep**, and the **food** that you consume, the better off your vitality will be.

Honestly, most people overthink this. Most would probably feel 1000x better if they simply:

- Walked barefoot 10 miles a day
- Got 8+ hours of sleep
- Ate more red meat

The real problem is that the U.S. is suffering a **vitality crisis**.

Our food source is poisoned.

Poison food → poison body

Poison body → poison mind

Poison mind → poison spirit

With that comes a lack of enthusiasm for life, and from that: a collective consciousness of **degeneration**, **complacency**, and **mediocrity**, neglecting beauty entirely.

But when you're full of vitality, with a **beautiful body**, **beautiful mind**, and **beautiful spirit**, you naturally gravitate toward beauty.

Strong Spine

For the past two months, I've been doing boxing, Ashtanga yoga, and HIIT training. During my yoga practice, the final pose is called *shavasana*—the corpse pose, where you lie on your back for a few minutes to reset your body.

The other day while in this pose, I could feel the energy traveling up my spine from the base to the top of my head.

Yoga has you doing some insane poses—legs behind your head, upside-down lotus, backflips. It makes me think a lot about the idea of having a **strong spine**.

Even right now, walking with this 40-pound weight carrier, I'm making sure my core is strong and flexed.

In yoga, they say "tighten your bonds," which means locking the internal muscles of your core and groin.

With a strong core comes a strong **foundation**. With a strong foundation comes a strong **spine**.

And with that, you minimize pain and maximize strength. You can stand, move, stretch, and exist fluidly throughout the day.

But there's a **metaphorical** meaning too:

A person with a strong spine has strong character, clear morals, solid beliefs. They know who they are and who they don't want to be.

With a strong spine, you won't participate in anything ugly, degenerate, or that doesn't uplift your spirit. You'll seek out experiences that elevate you.

I want to feel the energy travel from the base of my spine to my shoulders—giving me wings.

Fly Like a Bird

With vitality, it's like you're flying above all of society. When you're full of physical and mental strength, **nothing can break your spirit.**

Nothing feels like "work."

I think about retirement. Why do people crave it? Do you want to sit by a pool, drink cocktails, and do nothing for the rest of your life?

I like to think of **retirement as a mindset**. What if you designed your life *now* as if you were already retired?

Ask yourself:

- What would your everyday routine look like?
- How would you spend your time?
- What would you do?

Then simply **do that now**.

Avoid Everything Toxic

At least half the population is suffering from **brain fog**.

Brain fog → decision fatigue

Decision fatigue → lack of vitality

Lack of vitality → inability to create anything beautiful

Brain fog doesn't just come from food. It comes from the **toxic media** we're constantly consuming.

If you wake up and inject your brain with the worst headlines—killings, war, doom—you're going to feel awful, fatigued, and stuck.

But when you unplug from the matrix of media and regain clarity, you'll see the world as it truly is.

The birds are chirping.

The sun is rising.

Your bus driver said good morning.

The world is still turning.

Toxic food and toxic media = poison injected into your veins every morning.

Why would you do that?

Even alcohol—people drink every weekend, get hungover, and lose 2-3 full days of energy. That's *three days* of your life, gone.

And then with everyone fogged up, they protest, complain, and tear things down—when they could instead **transmute** their suffering into creation and victory.

Life Is a Video Game

If life were a video game, and you knew the game was rigged against you, wouldn't you want to change the rules?

Wouldn't you want to *advance to the next level*?

If the U.S. dollar is the thing subconsciously controlling all our actions—wake, eat, work, sleep—shouldn't we ask *why*?

Yes, you need food, shelter, and clothing. But the dollar loses value every year. And everything is getting more expensive.

"Prices are so high!"

"Inflation is out of control!"

We've all become donkeys walking toward a carrot that never arrives.

What if you cut the string?

What if you transformed from donkey to **lion**?

When I played *Skyrim*, I would grind out daggers to level up my smithing, so I could forge **dragon armor**. I see this as a metaphor.

Take the fiat currency → convert it into Bitcoin → hold something **scarce, valuable**, and **free**.

That's how you **store your time and energy** for the future.

Heal Yourself

When I played *League of Legends*, my favorite character was **Blitzcrank**. He was tanky, and the more hits he took, the stronger his defense got.

That's how I see life.

Take the hits:

The criticism.

The negativity.

The pain.

Transmute it into creativity.

Take the lust, the anger—convert it into:

- Art
- Photography
- Poetry
- Weightlifting

For me, I just wake up with vitality and **march to the cliff**.

The Body Is a Manifestation of God

If we were made in God's image, then the **body is the temple**.

Humans are God's most beautiful creations.

But when we neglect our bodies, we become ugly.

When we glorify them, we become godly.

To deify yourself in the flesh:

- Increase your strength
- Shed your fat
- Eat nourishing foods
- Prioritize sleep
- Maximize vitality

You can become a **demigod in the flesh.**