



**Harmony and perfection.**

The outward side of kindness.

Text by Valeria Orlando  
Photos by Maja Topcagic



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The outward side of kindness.

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**GentleBooklets** It is a series of long-form articles written by different authors. The booklets, designed for a quick read, feature texts and images. We have kindly asked to the authors to comment on the term “kindness.” Authors and photographers have donated their work. The motivations behind the project are the same as those of Gentletude, the desire to spread awareness about the need for “kindness” in our society, a society too focused on personal success to remember the basics of everyday living and respect for the environment that hosts us. Our decision to present these ideas in a series of publications is due to the awareness that, in order to stimulate people to think about these issues, it is necessary to present some concrete examples. In this case, the examples are provided in the texts written by the authors.



## **Beauty and kindness: a need for wellness**

As far as I am concerned, beauty is not material. As an artist I must test beauty through the five senses, it should fill every part of the existence: mind, heart, emotions and must also have the ability to transform these emotions into a perceptive faculty.

Beauty can come from everything, both concrete and abstract, just it makes me feel good.

“Beautiful” can be a person who strikes me positively, a day, in which something in particular does not necessarily happen; to have the time to read is also representative of a great beauty because it enhances our culture and brings us closer to a more spiritual sense.

Between the concept of wellness and kindness, there is a very strong link, even if the world where we live in, and the culture that pervades our society does not allow us to feel the true sense of wellbeing.

In fact, everything that is quick and easy does not give us the time to understand what makes us feel good, to breathe,









and to remember that today there is the sun, and it doesn't induce us to know new people. We are living in a world that is marked by superficiality and exteriority, I am increasingly aware of this sense of wellbeing in small things, that we often take for granted in everyday life.

It's difficult for us to understand this sense of wellbeing and beauty that surrounds us because we have no time to go through our past experiences again and to push us toward the future ones, then we tend to close ourselves rather than to open ourselves. The evil of our time is given by this closure.

As I'm a fan of Paolo Coelho, I would like to mention the metaphor that the author uses in the preface of one of his books in order to indicate as the selfishness that afflicts our society, leads us to live in this social closure, that is characterized by material wealth but it is completely lacking in any inner wealth.

According to him, people are divided into gardeners and builders: the gardeners are those who decide to live life wandering, victims of the wind and the frost and

who are living the natural four season's succession: the time to sow, to plow, to water and to reap the fruits.

The earth rests itself but it generates again the four phases.

The builders are faster because their target is to build the cathedral, they are so obsessed to achieve the goal and they do not realize that, once finished the cathedral, they forgot to build the door and the windows, so that it is now impossible to see the outside world.

It would be more appropriate, in order to be able to live in a harmonious way and to see beauty everywhere, to have the ability to separate the past experiences from the future and to have the possibility to move forward, without letting the past contaminate a new experience.

If I pretend that nothing must happens, when I review my life story I'll realize that I've missed the most beautiful things of life: friendship, love or a word exchanged with the greengrocers near my house.









## **Beauty in our society: stereotypes of the new century**

Although our society is always looking for pleasure, often it does not aspire to obtain the real welfare and it easily takes a shelter in the twenty-first century stereotypes: appearance, money, power and everything that is purely material.

One of the causes, without any doubt, is the lack of time, even if this is not the only one. Our society bases the concept of beauty on something that is material, giving birth of mechanisms, which I consider wrong.

People, of any age, think that beauty means something that for me can only be associated with the ugliness of the soul. It is a spasmodic search of perfection and a model of physicality and bodylines that doesn't nourish the soul.

In my opinion, this dependence on everything that is perfect and beautiful is a defence mechanism that people of our society use to avoid the reflection on the important things of life.

So they use to take refuge in futile things. The human being always tries to avoid

suffering pushing off the pain.

What does it mean? Not living or at least think that life is a continuous escape from anything that causes suffering.

A person who is not concerned about his own wounds, threw himself headlong into care of the outward beauty, trying to look like a given model, to have the same size, the same body or to live the same lifestyle.

The decision of the individual who doesn't want to have this lifestyle leads to the exclusion from the dominant group.

Those who have their own identity and are fighting against this conformism, are often regarded as misfits.

This twisted vision of beauty is unfortunately considered by a lot of people as the true "well Living".

Beauty in modern times, in addition, is inevitably subject of the business.

An artist may become a model to follow and what she has or wears becomes a "must have".

This influence is one of the reasons that prevents to have a free mind and to be able to understand what is really nice







and subsequently what is good for me. Women today have lost the courage to go out from the diagrams, to fight for their principles and convictions.

Because they live in a hedonistic society, people often attempts to move closer to the absolute of the outward beauty.

This is a difficult and vain goal, because our life transforms us continuously and if we do not learn to accept ourselves as we are and not to accept the product of these transformations through time, we will inevitably suffer. There is no more acceptance of time that goes by.

I'm 43 years old, in my life I lived marriage, I have two children and I tried to manage in the best possible way.

I have simultaneously tried to bring forward these three components of my life, I have always tried to fill all these three tanks.

Because the human being is part of these tanks that must be filled, commitment that requires a considerable amount of effort. What we need is the self-acceptance, and a consistently well stay in all the phases of life.



## **Subjective beauty and objective beauty: historical dualism**

To explain properly the difference between these two concepts I want to go back to Aristotle, the first philosopher that spoke about objective and subjective beauty.

While the concept of objective beauty is very strong, what the human beings have lost is the image of subjective beauty.

The basic idea is that there is no absolute concept of beauty and ugly, but it all depends on the subject and the personal interior vision.

While in our culture, beauty is given by a branded shoes, by going to hairdresser's divas, or having an expensive car, or travelling in luxury hotels, beauty in its absolute sense should be mainly represented by the concept of feeling good.

If I see a woman who has a beautiful body, according to the proportions of Leonardo's intuitions about beauty with a harmonious relationship between head, bust and torso, but she has not elegance, is not beauty for me.

I prefer a woman with imperfect propor-







tion but with a great aesthetic sense and an elegant gesture.

Unfortunately however, we see women that walk on high heels without caring about the fact that they are not able to wear them.

Knowing this world, I can give the reason why certain behaviours.

Unfortunately many people do not know how to recognize the difference between what is objectively beautiful and what is good in according to their physical features.

In some cases, it happens that they haven't an objective view of themselves, they earnestly want to look like a model without asking themselves, "I like it, but will it fit good on me?".

A sort of unconscious identity crisis leads people to not understand that this particular chapter of clothing or makeup does not fit well.

Then there are other subjects that, even if they haven't a physic that allows them to wear a particular capo of clothing or make-up, they are able to create a character.



An example in the world of music is Barbara Streisand.

Barbra Streisand has never been a beautiful woman, in particular because of her important nose, yet the trick is not to eliminate the problem, or cover the nose, but on the contrary to emphasize it.

In this case the personality supports what it lacks in physical beauty.

Many women, even if they are not considered sex symbol, have charm, intelligence and a presence that make them noticed, and indeed they do become true queens.

The feature that distinguishes these women is the consistency, the ability to stick to a precise philosophy throughout the course of their lives and do not betray it.

Many characters, especially in the world of fashion and the performing arts, can be criticized, often rightly, for their decisions and their ways of doing.

I admire them because they remain consistent with their lifestyle, they know that they are against the stream but for their decision they do not try to move toward





the direction of the mass.

Other women use strong makeup or a very provocative type of clothing even if they do not have a particular interior characteristic that is able to sustain their figure.

This choice comes out of the inability to fill in another way, the vacuum of the soul leads them to focus only on the exteriority.

If I have a nice décolletage and I think that thanks to this men welcome me, I will always tend to put on clothes that show my upper torso, I will draw the attention on me and on what is my point of force.

The risk, however, is to approach only to the cover of a person, not allowing him to see who there is behind. Only if I don't betray me and I constantly try to improve myself, I have some hope that someone could see the person behind that image.

## **Conclusions**

To conclude, beauty may be manifest in different ways, that belong to both the exteriority and interiority of a person, whether they come from an objective judgment as well as subjective.

I am convinced that kindness of beauty will save the world from ugliness, crippling of soul and the body; as well as all those stereotypes and charges of an ephemeral and empty society.







## **AUTHOR**

### **Valeria Orlando**

1996-2001 She worked for Compagnia della Bellezza with Renato Gervasi, and Salvo Giletti on the makeup project. She distributed her own line of Makeup: Cdb Makeup. In 2001 she moved to Milan as a freelancer in the fashion world in particular in the makeup staff of Donatella Versace. Here there are her look-book for the italian group VERSACE. In that period she was also responsible for testimonials and Vip Clients for the parades of VERSACE collection: Catherine Zeta-Jones , Christina Aguilera, Lenny Kravitz just to remember some names. Since the 2005 to today: she works really hard for Editorial fashion, Advertising, Beauty and Creative. Some of her customers: Versace, Cavalli, Louis Vuitton, Parah, Compagnia Italiana, Miss Money Money. She collaborates with: JWT, Saatchi & Saatchi, Leo Burnett, BBDO, Corbis, Novartis.

In JUNE 2013 her Vor Makeup is on the market. Vor supports and encourages humanitarian projects.

The 2014 is the year of her artistic skills in the world of Fine Art, the series that allows her to become famous was Clownville.

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## PHOTOGRAPHER

### **Maja Topcagic**

She was born in Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1989. She has a degree in mathematics and computer sciences and she currently works as computer science teacher in Bihac. She is also freelancing for Trevillion Images, 500px.com, Art+Commerce/Vogue Italia, and WIN New York.

She began taking photos when she was 20 years old and was given her first digital camera. She has never met the person who gave away his camera and sent it to her, but he changed her life. Since then, photography has become her greatest love.

She finds inspiration everywhere she goes, mostly she finds inspiration looking at the world through her eyes. It's often something interesting, weird and extraordinary. For her, mathematics is an art too. Everything that we see in nature, we can mathematically describe and write using photography.

The most important rewards are the first prize in the 2013 Good Light Magazine contest and in the «Portrait» contest announced by the Get Inspired Magazine.

[500px.com/majatopcagic](https://500px.com/majatopcagic)

## **GENTLETUDE**

Gentletude is a neologism composed of the words “gentilezza” (gentleness/kindness) and “attitudine” (attitude). It pursues the aims for a better world without violence, arrogance and rudeness. A world where caring and paying attention to others, common sense and balanced competitiveness are the most important things. The production provided by the association was completely free, based on the Commons Creative Criteria. Gentletude in Italy is a non-profit organization (NPO), and in Switzerland is a non-profit association.

Gentletude is part of the World Kindness Movement.

Contact Gentletude on the website: [www.gentletude.com](http://www.gentletude.com)



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