



***THOUGHTS IN
REFLECTIONS
ON LIFE***

Poetry and Sculpture

ROGER ELLMAN

Cataloging Data

Ellman, Roger (1932-)

Thoughts In Reflections On Life

Poetry and Sculpture

THOUGHTS IN REFLECTIONS ON LIFE

Copyright (c) Roger Ellman 2020

All rights reserved. This book may not be reproduced nor transmitted in any form nor by any means, electronic, mechanical or other including but not limited to photocopying, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system without written permission from the author, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

Library of Congress Control Number:2019918421

Published by: The-Origin Foundation, Inc.,
1401 Fountaingrove Pkwy.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403, USA

707-537-0257

<http://www.The-Origin.org>

ISBN: 9781706819257

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The-Origin Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization founded to foster independent scientific, mathematical, and philosophical research.

The author of the present work, Roger Ellman is the General Director of the foundation.

Roger Ellman has published over fifty professional papers on topics ranging from physics, cosmology, and astrophysics to artificial intelligence and mathematics.

He has presented some of his papers to conferences of / at:

The American Physical Society [APS], .

The American Society for the Advancement of Science,
Cambridge University, United Kingdom

The Library of Alexandria, Egypt

The Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, St Petersburg

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest

A Science Conference in Shang Hai, China

He is author of nine books in addition to the present “Thoughts In Reflections On Life”.

His education includes graduate studies at Stanford University after graduating from West Point, the United States Military Academy.

PREFACE

Abstract poetry and abstract sculpture, while very different forms of artistic expression, are nevertheless quite similar in how they deliver their messages. That is, the poetic message is not in the specific words of the poetry nor is the sculpture's message in the specific form of the sculpture. Rather, each of the two alternative forms of artistic expression creates, in its own way, a psycho-emotional environment, a "feeling" that expresses the intended message.

As with much of art, it is difficult if not impossible to verbally say what the message of the work of art is. It is in the nature of art to express things in the particular art form that are only expressible there and are not subject to ordinary speech. Art expresses that which is otherwise not expressible.

In the following each poem and the sculpture next to it say something to us, something meaningful, something that we feel but are unable to describe in speech. While the title of each poem and the name of its related sculpture are different, the messages of each of the pair are somehow meaningfully related.

THOUGHTS IN REFLECTIONS ON LIFE

THE STOIC UNDERSTANDING OF LIFE

Happiness = Equanimity and stems from Virtue

The Cardinal Virtues: *Justice, Temperance, Courage, and Prudence*
with *Patience and Love*

Equanimity is a state of psychological stability and composure which is undisturbed by experience of or exposure to emotions, pain, or other phenomena that may cause others to lose the balance of their mind.

Justice is the adjustment of conflicting claims or interests or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments with consistent impartiality in doing so.

Temperance is moderation in the indulgence of appetites and passions.

Courage is strength to venture or persevere in spite of fear or difficulty.

Prudence is the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason.

Life: the meaning, the import, the significance, the “point” of it all is precisely whatever we make of it. It is within our power – completely under our control – because it depends entirely on what we think, what our “attitude” is, and the energy, strength and determination we bring to them.

One could choose a life focused on *possessions*, on their acquisition, amassing, and consumption even though that choice results in never being satisfied, never having enough, and continually fearing losing that which one has acquired. Such a life is one of taking, not giving. It is not a creative life. It is a life forgotten and dismissed in the end.

Or, one could choose a life focused on *perfections* [generosity, morality, tolerance, energy, meditation, and wisdom], on their development and employment to the benefit of others and for one’s own satisfaction. And, that choice results in being fulfilled and at peace with oneself as compared to a life focused on possessions with its constant need and apprehension. It is the choice of perfections which requires energy, strength and determination, and that is the choice of the sharing, contributing and creative person.

The life of amassing possessions can have no meaning other than that that person exists only for himself and, therefore is of no objective value to anyone else, is of no value at all.

For one’s own life to have meaning it must have sharing, contributing and creating. And, that is the “point” of it all.



STRIVING

Striving simply represents its title. It is the struggle to construct and advance, onward and upward, building new on the base of old.

The piece is made of standard lumber yard planks of plastic artificial wood painted with a chrome spray paint.

THE UNIVERSAL

*The Universe,
the totality of reality with its
galaxies
stars
planets
substances
things
all interacting in harmony,
its being as itself, as it is,
is magnificent in
its natural beauty
simplicity
symmetry
and purity;*

*But it is nothing compared to Life,
which came from it.*

*And Life
achieves its culmination,
is nothing without,*

*Love:
person to fellow person
of comradeship and friendship
emotional
romantic
sexual
and especially
the touching of souls
in unison
in empathy
in harmony.*

*The greatest society
of rational beings
is that of social love;*

*And the greatest good,
the greatest thing in all existence,
without which everything else is meaningless,*

Is the love of one person for another.



THE MEANING OF IT ALL

The Meaning of it All seems to me to say just that. It expresses, it contrasts and unites: order with beauty, made by man with given by nature, parts with whole.

It is made from various commercially available standard ceramic tiles cut to the appropriate sizes and glued together, the “leaves” being artificial and copper spray painted.

RECEIVING

*In its way
it is as hard to receive as to give,
and*

*just as important as giving,
giving of oneself,
which is the only giving,
is the receiving, the accepting,
of the offering,
the giving of self
by another.*

*Friendship and love
are both
giving without inhibition
and
receiving without inhibition,*

*And happiness,
consists in
being fulfilled with both.*



PERSPECTIVE RATIO

Perspective Ratio expresses thinking about perspective with its lines streaming outward from a distant point while at the same time thinking about pleasing ratios as in the “golden mean” [= 1.618 ...]. The swirling colors make it all seem a little mysterious.

It is made from various commercially available cast concrete paving blocks or stepping stones.

IT IS UP TO US

*The greatest good
is love,
and the greatest bad, death.*

*Love is giving, sharing, being.
Death is taking, denying -- termination.*

*It is not life and death which are opposites
but love and death.
One can be "alive" but dead;
but, one cannot have loved and be dead
even though "dead".
Love surpasses even the end of life.*

*The end of life is assured all of us,
but of love none is assured.*

*But love is within our power;
we can create it,
bring it into being,
give and share it
at will.*

*Likewise death, but -- living should be love.
We opt for that and,
in so doing
create life
and survive even beyond death.*



WHICH ? WHY ?

On the surface this piece is simply asking a question, asking for a decision, a decision between brown rectilinear wood and a white concrete ball. But, the piece really provokes inquiry, questioning, thinking, evaluating.

ALONE

It is such a curious thing ...

not frightening,

not alarming,

not (really) surprising,

only gradually materializing,

only so slowly

coming to be understood,

but ... yes, of sadness,

of immense sadness,

of incomprehensible sadness:

I · am · alone.

*In a world filled with people,
personal life abounding in relationships
and a lovely spouse and five adult children:*

I · am · alone

completely alone

totally alone.

It is important

for sanity,

for survival,

for what modicum of happiness

perhaps can still be,

to face it, to recognize it, to adjust to it:

I · am · alone.

There is not a being,

there is not anyone,

not a single person

whom I can count on,

whom I can rely on,

whom I can trust.

*There is not one person who cares
about me,
about how I feel,
about what happens to me,*

*(except, of course, to the extent of the
normal forms and procedural concerns
practiced for the sake of appearances).*

*There is no one who is willing,
there is no one who cares, to try*

*to understand me,
to, even at least a little,
relate to my feelings*

*to in any meaningful way relate
to my hopes
fears
aspirations
weaknesses
needs.*

There is only myself.

*There is not now,
there has never been,
and there will not ever be*

some other one there for me.

*This is not bitterness, merely reality,
mere fragile human nature being its natural self,
the world being as it is, ... but*

*I must do it all,
I must be it all,
I must, somehow, handle it all*

-- alone.



A L O N E

Alone, especially uniqueness, is not necessarily bad.

The piece is made of ordinary commercial marble tiles, cut and beveled to fit.

CRY FOR THE WORLD

Cry for the world ...

*for the failed loves that meant so much,
for the lost dreams that meant even more;*

cry for the immense “might have been”

and for the sad “what has been made of it”,

cry for the gifts of natural and created beauty

and the mockery of their destruction;

cry for the sweetness of rationality, logic and truth

*and the bitterness of the lies and hypocrisy that scorns
them;*

cry for the world

While living in comfort and luxury

a life of fulfillment, a life of achievement

that most would envy,

yet sad and unsatisfied with all;

wanting, needing, perfection everywhere;

I cry for the world ...

... and for myself

... and I really don't know why.



P A N E

That which is noble and good is simple and direct.

Pane is a rectangle of thick slate mounted on wood. The ripples on the slate surface are a result of the way it was sawed from a larger mass of slate.

DIALOG WITH A COLUMBINE

I love you for that ...

... of course

*I should love you anyway,
but I did not even
notice,
or care,
or think.*

*Until you showed me,
you taught me*

*What life is,
and how,
and why.*

*Co-beings,
we share the transience of life --*

*A brief flowering
in beauty
before relinquishing that
and life.*

*A brief flowering
in beauty
before relinquishing that
and life.*

*Yet we each still remain, you and I,
in the beauty of what we have been,
in the beauty of what we have done,
which are the significance of our being.*



CONTRAST GROWTH

This is based on the idea of a sculpture in an art gallery in Chelsea, New York City. It was indoors sitting directly on the floor.

To me in a more natural environment, above, it speaks its title.

It sits on a piece of thick slate and it is made of:

- Candle-like light bulbs painted “Navajo White”, screwed into into electric sockets, those plugged into a block of florist foam, and
- Pieces of black “discharge hose” around which is wrapped window sash chain.

WHERE ARE WE GOING ?

*The past we possess.
The future lies before us.
Good, bad, ours to own.*

*The past – harvest done,
The future waits for planting.
What crop will we grow ?*



PROGRESS

Progress is about just what its name says. The intent is to provoke thinking about “progress”. It represents progress in its two identical pieces, implying a third, fourth, etc. continuing to the right. It also projects progress in its advance from a single square to two squares so that the mind is led to imagine the next succeeding three squares and so forth. Finally it leads the imagination from the lower left upward and onward to the right – progress.

The pieces are made from standard lumber yard planks of plastic artificial wood except that the plain back [not visible in the above picture] is of ordinary plywood. The paint is a Navy Blue spray paint partially oversprayed with flat black.

THE BEAUTIFUL

- Beauty communicates, puts forth or expresses feelings that are abstract rather than logical concepts, feelings that are not, or not as well expressible other than through beauty.

- Beauty is wanted, is valued solely for itself, not for any benefit other than that which results from contemplation of the communication expressed.

- That which beauty expresses is always true. We instinctively, automatically recognize it as true, as unarguably valid. It is that about beauty that pleases us most.

- In a world that appears to be filled with imperfection and disorder beauty offers the opposite.

The beautiful satisfies a need that we have.

It is difficult to contend that beauty is a need, really essential to the functioning and survival of a rational being although some have felt so on occasion. On the other hand beauty certainly is wanted and it is a want that is not harmful to functioning and survival.

One might propose:

That beauty is the highest form of truth,
Just as compassion is the highest form of love,
And equity is the highest form of justice.



TORI GATE

This is meant to evoke the traditional Japanese Garden.

The principal content is a Mugho Pine, a Red Japanese Maple, Ivy, stone, the fountain and, of course, the simple Tori Gate..

FULFILLMENT

*So, now, here we have reality,
a natural universe that came from nothing
and, eventually, will so disperse itself
as to return to, essentially, nothing.*

*And which, during its brief, but glorious
transit from nothing ... to nothing,
evolves rational Life.*

*Life, magnificent in potential and capability,
dreadfully fettered by its natural origin;
what will become of it ?*

*Will the society of social love evolve
and crown natural reality
with its beauty and magnificence ?*

*Perhaps.
One can dream.*

The path is understanding:

*understanding our origin,
understanding our natural nature,
using the unavoidable facts that so fetter us
-- the now innate personal survival
and dominant self interest --
to construct, even from these,
the civilization of mankind,
of Life.*

*But, is there no objective standard of good and bad,
of right and wrong ?*

It would seem not ... yet ...

There are, and have always been

*Truth and Beauty,
Love and Compassion,
Justice and Equity,
Rationality, Culture and Humanism.*

*But they exist not in realization
but only as ideals.*

*They have always existed
because they are universal.
Their existence does not depend upon implementation.
They exist in and of themselves as natural principles.*

*They are the only permanent reality,
the only infinite reality.*

They ... they are God.

*They cause ?
Yes, they cause events, behavior.*

*They judge ?
They are the judge of all that we do.*

*They think ?
Yes, but not in our searching, learning sense. Rather,
they know.*

*They create, not imperatively but by urging.
They tend-urge all to form to their model.*

*Do they have power ?
They have more power than anything else,
They have supreme power.*

*Do they love ?
They Are love.*

*Can we communicate with God ?
Yes, by our thought, intent, behavior.*

*Can we participate in God ?
Yes, to the extent that we, also, become ...*

... Truth and Beauty

Love and Compassion

Justice and Equity

Rationality, Culture and Humanism

BE THOU AT PEACE