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Lipstick: Therapy for the Soul?

Zephyryn Conte

When you think of “lipstick,” what thought usually follows? Soul? Likely not. The word lipstick transports me to a mirror in a crowded lady’s room where choruses of women lament, “I’m too this or too that,” and where the focus on runny mascara or forgotten foundation is all so dramatic! With this picture, maybe the next thought is “therapy.” Or... maybe it’s an awakened soul, visibly alive, glowing on the surface of otherwise adorned skin...

Beauty is only skin deep is a common expression that alludes to the superficiality of physical beauty that is without substance or soul. In 1613 when Sir Thomas Overbury first penned “All the carnal beauty of my wife is but skin deep,” hopefully he was extolling his wife’s substantive inner virtues! If the key to soulful beauty is paying attention to our inner core as well as our outer presentation, then appreciating our own experiences is a powerful starting-point.

The therapy of “alchemical physiognomy”

There is more to be learned from observing our faces than we are generally taught. As we explore the inner reservoir of substantive beauty, we have to ask, “Does my outer expression reflect and correlate comfortably with my inner experience and self-understanding? Or, does it somehow betray it, or mask it?” When considering the picture of ourselves we “paint” for the world to see, a healthy observation of our own features helps us to understand the “canvas” we are painting on.

Physiognomy is an ancient art of “face reading” that can be traced back to 1200 BC China. Aristotle also wrote about the science of discerning temperament from facial features. Our face tells a lot about our personality, history and destiny, and in the ancient *Mian Xiang* tradition, face reading is a highly evolved art. For the purpose of understanding character (or predicting experiences), ancient physiognomy offers much food for thought. Applying some of the ancient wisdom is useful and can be therapeutic. But some of its “tenets” can be intimidating or can inadvertently brand a person in ways that might limit. “Alchemical physiognomy” however, means that we are transmuting “what we were given.” As we observe ourselves critically, we also hold the belief that when we deepen our inner understanding and tap into “source” energy, all things are possible. Regardless of how we look at any point of self-observation, we can evolve and change our appearance, presence, and even our “fate.”

A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words

While it’s true, you “can’t judge a book by its cover,” it is also true that the first thing you encounter about a book is its “cover appeal.” Bridging the inner with the outer is not necessarily an easy path. There can be many psychological twists, turns, and resistances along the way! When we value our unique characteristics as our beauty, we are more compelled to celebrate, and project our inner experience outwardly. Some ask why any outer enhancement is necessary. I think of the book cover analogy. Do you want to be “read” in the fullness of you, or as a shadow of who you are? It is always a personal choice. “Outer” rituals of self-adornment like using make-up, aromatherapy, or flattering garments, can be profoundly powerful tools for soothing an inner wound, a lack of vitality, or a lack of enthusiasm for life. “Popping” your features and allowing yourself to be seen and felt more vibrantly is how “lipstick” can become therapy for the soul!

“A thing of beauty is a joy forever”

Women today are rising as “goddesses of self-empowerment, decisive action, self-love, and nurturing compassion! It’s a personal journey to understand how you emerge “glowing” as a leader with enthusiastic self-confidence, a compassionate heart, and an open and curious mind – the qualities of true beauty! Evolving our cultural appreciation for authentic and substantive beauty is a challenge that might be compared to walking a tightrope! So on your way to the high wire between your inner beauty and your outer expression, remember to grab your favorite lipstick. It just may give you some soul therapy as you balance your walk on the wire! -from John Keats’ poem, *Endymion*, 1818

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Affirming substantive beauty is important for women and men. This appreciation exercise can be powerful for either, and makes a great bonding activity for couples. Facing a friend, alternate sharing several answers to each statement: My EYES have seen... My EARS have heard... My NOSE has smelled... My LIPS have tasted... My FACE has touched... My arms have held... I "stand for"... I love... From this listening, a heightened appreciation for the hidden value of each person emerges. When our "source" connection strengthens, our reservoir of "knowing" surfaces and shows on our face. This inner glow is authentic substantive beauty!

Astrology continued from page 5...

♈ CAPRICORN (DEC. 21-JAN. 19) Your ongoing transformation continues into the present moment. The push and pull of circumstance has never been stronger or more mentally captivating, and it leads you toward reconsideration of your life mission. The simple and homey truth has been making itself more and more evident that you are only partly here for yourself. Sudden access of information seeds the crystal of new visualization. On into July you are feeling even stronger visions of change. Partners are part of the process, one way or another. Clinging to the past is painful but could be necessary, and you will let go when you are ready. When you get into the swing of this new mandate, the fun really begins and you can let others into the circle of a glorious new you without fear of compromising your principles.

♊ AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 17) You are still experiencing everyday miracles. The magic act that is your constant presence in the cosmos continues into the current cycle. This time around the stars are shining more brightly and opening you up even more boldly to whatever inner dream space realizations you are now ready for. You are going through a tremendous push right now that will illuminate your stuck places but you could find that you have to explore being really mired in the mud before you finally get there. Never fear, true freedom will eventually emerge and when it does it will be accompanied, paradoxically, by a fuller sense of responsibility also.

♋ PISCES (FEB. 18-MARCH 19) This is a fabulous time to be alive. You are being welcomed once again to the mystical landscape your own interior that is simultaneously very difficult to get a handle on and yet in another way blazingly obvious. Truly is it said that now you see as through a glass, darkly, but then, face to face. On into September you are strong on service, not martyrdom, and intent upon examining your role in an expanded future that includes literally everything. As you explore both the trials and suffering of normal life on the planet and also the subtle and unlimited magnificence of your inner world, the trick is to find a way to reconcile these seeming opposites. They are in actuality two sides of the very same coin.

Ode To Michael Jackson

Apollo Poetry (TravelingPoet.com)



Society. I must ask you now.
Do you Remember The Time when a man inspired us to not Stop until We Had Enough? And once we did, he told us to Beat It. The Man in the mirror saw himself in Black and White. Because he realized it would take a Thriller to Heal the World.

Do we mourn the loss of an icon? Does death seem more real to us now? Heroes aren't supposed to die. They're supposed to live forever. Our childhoods were supposed to always last. Our dreams are suppose to keep us alive.

Perhaps the part of us that still believed in Neverland died a long time ago. And since we stopped believing in our imaginations, we had to destroy anybody who didn't give up on theirs.

I wonder if the jokes will stop now.
Now that he has lost his face, is he finally beautiful enough for society?
Now that he has angel wings, is he finally white enough for the media?
Now that he is gone, how many comedians have to re-write their act?
This is what we do humanity.
We take something beautiful and destroy it.
So today, we don't mourn the loss of an icon.
We mourn the loss of what the icon represented in our own consciousness.
We mourn the loss of our dreams. Our imagination. Our childhood.

Do you remember the time? Do you remember the time?
Back when we can play without fear of being judged.
Back when we can fly without the fear of falling down.
Back when we could smile, for absolutely no reason at all.
We have spent so much time working, that we have forgot how to play.
We have spent so much time standing still in our lives, that we have forgot how to dance.
Not only have we robbed ourselves of our childhood dreams, but we have criticized others for following theirs.

Perhaps Michael is now singing with God.
Perhaps he is flying with Peter Pan.
Perhaps he is now moon walking on the clouds of heaven.
Wherever he is, I know that he is finally free.
Free to be who he is, rather than a prisoner of who he was.
We haven't lost an entertainer. We have lost ourselves.
And his death didn't happen in June of 2009. It happened many years ago.
And WE...were the murderers.
The killers of our inner child. The judges of our own fate. The builders of our own prisons.

Michael Jackson.
I pray that you don't rest in peace....
I hope that you dance in it.

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