

Towards a Hyo Jeong Philosophy of Art

David Eaton

January 31, 2018

Journal of Unification Studies Vol. 18, 2017 - Pages 157-170



I have always believed that art and creativity are among God's greatest gifts to humanity. When I founded the Little Angels Art School in Korea, I gave the school a motto: "The Three Love Principle: Love God, Love Mankind and Love Your Country." Through the arts we can communicate true love to the world. Music, art and dance are the expressions of the soul. The world of the arts must exist in the world of God as supreme and spiritual.

It has been my hope that artists could embrace the ideal of art for humanity and beauty for earth. Art is like a flower for man's mind. It blossoms and permeates throughout our lives and society. It has the ability to connect people together through their hearts.[\[1\]](#)

This quote by the Unification movement founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon at the time of his establishing the Sun Hwa Art School in Korea and its resident performing arts troupe, The Little Angels, epitomized his commitment to realizing a culture of peace by utilizing human creativity in its most exalted form. Because the paradigm of Beauty, Truth and Goodness is central to his teachings, he viewed it as imperative for artists, as co-creators with our Heavenly Parent, to understand the moral power of the arts and make choices in their creative endeavours that were in accord with the Divine Principle. For Rev. Moon, "art for humanity and beauty for earth" was more than a poetic aphorism; it was a credo that altruistic artists should embrace with alacrity.

As Rev. Moon recalls in his autobiography, there was little understanding among the early church members as to why he would invest so heavily into an arts school at a time (1958) when the church was in its nascent condition. Korea was still recovering from the forty-year Japanese occupation (1905-1945) and a catastrophic war that had devastated much of the country. Resources were scant and given the severe economic realities of that time not many church members were fully supportive of this venture.

Still, Rev. Moon pressed on with the establishment of the school. Both the Sun Hwa Arts School and the Little Angels are now the source of immense pride, not only within the Unification movement but also throughout Korea. The Little Angels have become among the finest cultural ambassadors for the vision of our founders, acting as a "secret weapon" that opened the hearts of countless people, thus allowing our founders to carry God's message of true love and peace to the world.

The establishment of the Sun Hwa Arts School was just the beginning. In the ensuing decades Rev. and Mrs. Moon created and nurtured a number of performing arts ensembles with the intent of creating a culture based on godly virtues. As patrons of the arts they continually demonstrated an earnest commitment to their ideals and their vision of a "heavenly culture."

Unificationist Performing Arts

As Rev. and Mrs. Moon brought their ministry to the United States the role of culture and art became an important aspect in advancing their work. The Korean Folk Ballet and the New Hope Singers International were created in the early 1970s and in the spirit of the Little Angels carried on the role of cultural ambassadors as part of Rev. Moon's early Day of Hope speaking tours. These ensembles were the featured performers at many of his speech events in America, Japan and Korea, including performances at Carnegie Hall, Yankee Stadium and Madison Square Garden.

In 1973 Rev. and Mrs. Moon became the primary patrons of the New York City Symphony, rescuing the orchestra, which was originally founded in 1926, from serious economic difficulties. It was also during this time that several musicians in the church formed the Pop-Rock band Sunburst, an ensemble that toured extensively in the United States as part of Rev. Moon's evangelical campaigns. Taking their cue from the musicians in Sunburst, other church members formed bands, including J.C. Chen, Advent, Drek Dü Boyz and Ancestors. Talented singers and songwriters including Seiko Hatano, Sheila Vaughn, Joe Longo, Joshua Cotter, John Schuhart, Sandra (Singleton) Lowen and Dan Fefferman also contributed to the performing arts dispensation by creating new songs and recording projects.

To celebrate America's bicentennial in 1976, Rev. Moon formed the Go World Brass Band, a 60-piece ensemble that embodied the American patriotic spirit with stirring renditions of iconic American composers such as John Phillip Sousa and Duke Ellington. (Dr. Bo Hi Pak and Rev. Joong Hyun Pak were tasked with nurturing the arts in the U.S.A during this period.)

The bicentennial saw another rescue effort take place with the purchase of the historic Manhattan Center. In the 1950s and 60s, the venue had been a prime recording local for many of the world's most celebrated classical artists. Originally built by Oscar Hammerstein in 1907 as a full-fledged opera house, the facility went through several make-overs and eventually became the preferred recording venue in New York City for prominent artists and ensembles, including Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, the New York Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Opera. Having fallen into dire financial straits, the venue was restored by Rev. and Mrs. Moon back to its former glory with classical recordings and film scores now being produced there on a regular basis.

In 1978, the founders sent thirty musicians from the Go World Brass to London to begin a brass-band initiative in Europe. Several new bands were formed, and eventually a major concert was presented at the Royal Albert Hall. The remaining thirty musicians of the band, along with the International Folk Ballet, joined the Collegiate Association of the Research of the Principle (CARP) and were divided into three new bands: The Blue Tuna Band, Prime Force and The Front Group. These ensembles toured college campuses for three years from 1979 to 1981 under the leadership of Rev. Chung Gu "Tiger" Park, Dan Fefferman and Hiroshi Matsuzaki.

In the early 1980s, Linda Eisenberg parlayed her love for Broadway musicals into the theatrical troupe, The New World Players. Linda and her members became the primary production team that produced many of the Unification Church's Holy Day celebrations at the Manhattan Center. The New World Players presented several Broadway classics including Man of La Mancha, The Wiz and Godspell.

It was also in the 1980s that Adrienne Dellas Thornton began to develop a classical ballet initiative that included Rev. Moon's gifted daughter-in-law, Julia Moon. With the patronage of the founders and the guidance of Dr. Bo Hi Pak, Adrienne formed the Universal Ballet featuring Julia as its principal dancer. This company would bring the classical ballet tradition in Korea to new heights. Julia's training as a ballerina at the Academie de Danse Princesse Grace in Monaco made her the perfect choice to advance the classical dance tradition to audiences in Korea who might otherwise not have been able to experience world-class ballet productions.

Universal Ballet's signature production is the original ballet, Shim Chung: The Blindman's Daughter. Based on a well-known Korean tale of filial love, the lead role of Shim Chung was created by Ms. Thornton for Julia Moon. The brilliant score was composed by Kevin Pickard. Shim Chung was performed on seven occasions in Seoul during the 1988 Summer Olympics with the New York City Symphony providing the musical accompaniment.

Soon after the premiere of Shim Chung, a new ballet school was created in Washington, D.C. The Kirov Ballet Academy (originally known as the Universal Ballet Academy) took its name from the famed Kirov Ballet in Russia, and within a few years the school was providing world-class ballet training in the United States with a Russian ballet faculty headed by Oleg Vinogradov, 23-year director of the Kirov Ballet in St. Petersburg and his wife, Elena Vinogradova. The Vinogradovs made a vital contribution during the academy's formative years and served as the school's Artistic Directors from 1990 to 2007.

Mr. Vinogradov also brought his wealth of experience with the Russian ballet tradition to Korea, staging several ballet classics including Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty and La Bayadere with the Universal Ballet; and later serving as the company's Artistic Director from 1998 until 2007. Under Julia Moon's artistic direction the Universal Ballet has won numerous national and presidential awards, most recently the Sejong Cultural Award for 2016, for contributions to the development of classical ballet in Korea and abroad.

It was largely due to the successful efforts of the Universal Ballet that two arts management companies were developed: Beato Music in Japan and Universal Arts Management in New York City. Moreover, the artistic success of the Universal Ballet, the New York City Symphony and the Manhattan Center in the 1980s prompted the founders to launch annual meetings of international artists under the auspices of the Artists Association International (AAI). In keeping with Rev. Moon's ideas regarding the moral power of the arts, the AAI assembly of artists, producers and administrators advocated the importance of assessing art from an axiological perspective. In 1995 a new iteration of AAI was created under the banner of Artist Association for World Peace.

In the late 1980s, Hyo Jin Moon, Rev. Moon's eldest son, initiated a new cultural endeavour at the Manhattan Center. A talent guitarist and songwriter, Hyo Jin oversaw the creation of several state-of-the-art recording studios for audio and video production with an eye on using popular music and cinema as

vehicles for witnessing and networking with other musicians and music industry VIPs. He produced dozens of albums featuring his own compositions as well as those by other church artists.

Hyo Jin had formed several bands as a young musician (including Yu Band and Ancestors) as a way to develop his musical abilities and set the tone for the Pop music providence in Korea, Japan, Europe and America. While leading CARP he was the inspiration behind the formation of New Vision, another in the long line of Pop-Rock ensembles that toured college campuses with the intent of using music for outreach and witnessing. The Hyo Jin Moon Band remains active in Japan and Korea with his children often appearing as the band's lead vocalists.

Hyo Jin was a serious advocate of utilizing current technologies in both the audio and video realms. Many of the early recordings that were produced in the new Manhattan Center recording studios utilized these new technologies. A series of CD releases under the title, Parents' Favorites featured well-known Korean art songs arranged in contemporary styles: Pop, Rock, Jazz, Fusion and New Age. Through these recording projects, composers, arrangers and producers honed their skills in the newly emerging Digital-MIDI technology. [\[2\]](#)

This is by no means a comprehensive history of all who contributed to the foundation of music, dance and theater in the Unification Church, but these artistic enterprises testify to the inspiration and commitment of the founders and their vision of utilizing art in a transformative way.

Hyo Jeong Cheon Won

In 2016, under the guidance of Hak Ja Han Moon, a new cultural initiative was created under the rubric of Hyo Jeong Cheon Won (Garden of Filial Love). Citing her and her husband's desire to transform culture according to godly virtues, she requested that several artists from a variety of artistic disciplines to come to Korea to participate in establishing this foundational organization under which this new cultural paradigm would be conducted. At the time of the launch of this new directive, Mrs. Moon shared that she and her husband had often discussed the idea of a major international arts enterprise emanating from Korea. However, this could not come to fruition in the manner they had hoped for due to more pertinent providential necessities. Still, the vision remained in their hearts and now is the time for that vision to become a reality.

This new arts organization, the Hyo Jeong Cultural Committee (HJCC), will include the realms of music, fine arts, martial arts, theater, dance (under the direction of the Little Angels) and social media. In explaining her hopes for the new venture, Mrs. Moon often referenced her eldest son, Hyo Jin and his dream of creating world-class artworks that would reflect and express the heart of true love and filial piety. His vision is fundamental to the Hyo Jeong arts effort.

Central to Mrs. Moon's many ideas regarding this new artistic providence is the creation of a cultural center near the International Headquarters in Gapyeong, Korea. This new facility will include a performance hall, a recording studio, an art gallery, a dance studio and an academy where young, talented artists can receive training in their particular discipline. The curriculum, in addition to developing one's craft, will emphasize moral and ethical precepts regarding the role of artists in contributing to a morally upright society. Having a principled attitude with regard to the creative process is, in her view, essential to creating Shimjeong culture. With this as a primary concern, the academy will focus on instructing students in Divine Principle, Unification Thought and the Hyo Jeong Philosophy of Art.

Furthermore, Mrs. Moon is stressing the importance of unity and cooperation among Unification artists and arts organizations throughout the world, especially Manhattan Center Studios in New York, the MC studio in Tokyo, and the new Hyo Jeong Cultural Center in Korea. Based on mutual cooperation between artists of the three providential nations (Korea, Japan and America), a foundation for joint ventures could develop in a way that could assist artists from around the world who otherwise might not have the opportunities to have their creative endeavours produced and promoted in a professional manner.

Among the initial projects that have been realized by the HJCC, perhaps the most ambitious have been the large-scale theatrical productions that chronicled the life and work of the True Parents. In 2017 a musical theater piece entitled The Dream of Hyo Jeong featured a cast of over one hundred participants, original music, and state-of-the-art staging that was on the level of anything one might experience in Las Vegas or on Broadway.

Also in 2017, a song-writing contest was conducted under the auspices of the Hyo Jeong Music subcommittee. Over one hundred songs were submitted from composers representing twelve countries, nine languages and a variety of genres. This contest will be conducted annually with the hope of adding new songs to the Family Federation Holy Song canon. A website will be developed to showcase these new songs as well as historical songs that have been composed and performed at church events throughout the years.

The Transformative Power of the Arts and Hyo Jeong Culture

Fundamental to the concept of "art as a change agent" is the issue of morality and ethics. Because our choices and values determine our identities, charting our destinies as co-creators with God requires that we make choices according to godly virtues. In an age where religious belief is eviscerated with disturbing regularity, choosing to create art with sacred intentions is a noble enterprise. Art and creativity are not immune to the influences of secularism and materialism, thus the choices artists make, in art and in life have consequences. We don't create, or live, in a vacuum.

In assessing the role of art and artists in creating a culture of peace, Rev. Moon articulated his view in his autobiography:

People often think that politics moves the world, but that is not the case. It is culture and art that move the world. It is emotion, not reason, that strikes people in the innermost part of their hearts. When hearts change and are able to receive new things, ideologies and social regimes change as a result.^[3]

Of course, the idea of art having transcendent attributes that can affect one's consciousness goes back thousands of years. Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, Boethius, Aquinas, Kant, Hume, Schiller and other enlightened individuals understood the moral aspect of creativity as well as the transcendence of beauty -- whether it was God's beauty (nature) or the beauty created by humankind (art). Regarding the moral power of music, Confucius went as far as to say that if one wished to know the moral condition of a particular society, "the quality of its music would furnish the answer."^[4]

Friedrich Schiller, who as a young man possessed an ardent desire to study theology and pursue a life as a cleric, believed that the state of one's soul-state (Seelenzustand) was edified through experiencing beauty. For Schiller, "aesthetic education" could be the basis for a moral society and "would help establish the freedom that political revolution conspicuously failed to achieve."^[5] Immanuel Kant, who was greatly influenced by Schiller's views regarding aesthetic education, understood that the pleasure we experience from that which we perceive as being beautiful was beyond pure reason; yet those experiences were valid and universal---everyone had them. In his observations of Schiller's influence on Kant with regard to the nexus of aesthetics and morality, Roger Kimball, publisher of the *The New Criterion*, writes:

The feeling of freedom and wholeness that aesthetic experience imparts is thus not merely private but reminds us of our vocation as moral beings. In this context, Kant famously spoke of beauty as being "the symbol of morality" because in aesthetic pleasure "the mind is made conscious of a certain ennoblement and elevation." Thus, it is that although taste is "the faculty of judging an object... by an entirely disinterested satisfaction" it is also "at bottom a faculty for judging the sensible illustration of moral ideas."^[6]

Kant acknowledged that the pleasure derived from artistic beauty was not merely about emotions or affectations, but something far more sublime; transcendental, in fact. He cited three types of pleasure in the Platonic sense; that which is agreeable, good and beautiful. Moreover, he proffered that aesthetics should have its own faculty, namely judgment, which would mediate between the faculties of pure reason and practical reason. Kant's views of aesthetics vis-à-vis "ennoblement and elevation" were not unlike those of Confucius, Plato, Boethius, Aquinas, Augustine and New Age spiritualists of our own time.

British philosopher Roger Scruton notes that Kant "situates the aesthetic experience and religious experience side by side," and suggests that it is the aesthetic experience that is "the archetype of revelation."^[7] It could be said that by experiencing beauty via the cultural legacies of the past, we become more conscious of our station in relationship to both God and the natural world. When this occurs, the true and complete essence of our being is affirmed.

Echoing the views of Kant regarding aesthetics, Unificationist theologian Dr. Young Oon Dr. Kim asserted that it is in "the transmoral dimension of aesthetic experience" that we experience the most exalted aspects of that which is divine and transcendent. As Dr. Kim posits, the degree to which an artistic endeavour embodies godly attributes is proportionally the degree to which God's nature is substantiated, and this in turn, evokes "a response of love and appreciation" from those who come in contact with it. Moreover, according to Dr. Kim, "since God represents absolute love and freedom, beauty is never confined."^[8] Accordingly, art that embodies godliness has the potential to touch validly the hearts and minds of whoever may experience it regardless of cultural, ethnic, racial or social circumstances.

Much contemporary, Western art has become antipodal to what had been the accepted norms regarding beauty and art dating back to the early Christian philosophers and especially the Renaissance -- a time when creating art and music based on religious convictions and scientific principles was celebrated as a reflection of humankind's ability to realize its fullest potential. Because religion and science in the Renaissance were not considered mutually exclusive entities, but rather correlative facets of the human

experience, there existed an understanding that these modalities, when harmoniously integrated in artworks, could yield sublime expressions of great beauty and meaning.

There is a common misconception that the Enlightenment was a kind of lightning bolt that abruptly ended all religious belief and reliance on supernatural phenomenon resulting in the immediate supplanting of religious beliefs with pure reason and logic.^[9] In fact, there was no immediate rejection of religion, and as we know many people, artists included, remained believers well into the twentieth century, (Stravinsky and Messiaen, e.g.) As Melanie Phillips observes, history is complex process whereby seemingly conflicting ideas are evolving concomitantly. As she puts it: "The seismic struggle between reason and irrationality well predated the Enlightenment; and the ideas generated by the Enlightenment created historical feedback loops of reaction and counter-reaction that continue to this day." The ideological debates that erupted in the late twentieth century are largely predicated on these same "feedback loops." Phillips avers that the current iteration of culture wars and the subsequent "unraveling of the Enlightenment" is the result of the spurious rationale, "that reason can exist detached from the civilization that gave it birth... the fundamental error of thinking that to be 'enlightened' necessarily entails a repudiation of religion."^[10]

Discussing Saint Augustine's writings about establishing a virtuous society, American economist and author David P. Goldman observes, "Augustine argued that... people fail because they love the wrong things. A nation defines itself by what it loves, and the wrong kind of love condemns it to eventual ruin."^[11] In this regard, the arts have not been exempt from the corrosive influences of modernity and secularism. It could be said that many artists have chosen to love the wrong things, resulting in a great deal of art that is anathema to creating a culture of peace. This is an issue that many contemporary artists have not fully comprehended---or have willfully ignored. The primary task of the Hyo Jeong cultural initiative will be to offer an alternative rationale predicated on "higher virtues" that can act as a corrective to secularism and hyper-commercialism. By providing an alternative rationale based on Godism, artists can recalibrate their creative impulses. As Rev. Moon states, "the 'ism' in Godism means 'way of living.'"^[12] In the context of art this means the way of creating.

Censoriousness regarding moral and ethical concerns that often permeates the contemporary cultural mindset has the effect of becoming a shield against legitimate scepticism or any corrective sensibilities. The adolescent predilection for instant gratification in our live-for-the-moment culture, combined with crass commercialism, has led to a condition where a good deal of popular music, for instance, has become coarse and without much redeeming social value. Objections to the destructive effects of popular culture are often met with charges of intolerance or insensitivity, as if there is no legitimate or rational concern about how popular culture -- music, cinema, and television -- continuously capitulates to our most base instincts.

When Baruch Spinoza asserted, "All happiness or unhappiness solely depends upon the quality of the object to which we are attached by love,"^[13] he was echoing St. Augustine's cautionary commentary regarding choosing to "love the wrong things." Though Augustine possessed a "timorous distrust" about music's sensual properties, he nonetheless intuited that music, when applied in a sacred fashion and with altruistic motivation, could assist in developing a more devotional frame of mind, and this, in turn, could be beneficial in cultivating a more meaningful relationship with God and the realization of a more humane society.

Despite attempts at uncoupling the axiological aspect of art from its aesthetic or technical aspects, the moral and ethical power of music remains an important consideration. As musicologist Richard Taruskin puts it:

As long as some music somewhere is considered tref [not kosher], we have not forgotten that music is a powerful form of persuasion that does work in the world, as serious art that possesses ethical force and exacts ethical responsibilities.^[14]

Love is manifested through action. How we act, how we create and how we relate to our fellow citizens becomes our essential trial in our attempt toward establishing a more humane reality. Historically, there have been artists of all disciplines and circumstances who have demonstrated a willingness to use their talent to endorse and contribute to causes that they view as being conducive to achieving peace and good will. As mentioned previously, our examination of the cultures of antiquity reveals that those cultures possessed a healthy respect for the notion that creativity and art had divine origins and possessed certain moral and ethical aspects, and as such, artists had a moral obligation to use their talent in an ethical manner.

Five Motivations for Creating Art in Unification Thought

Building bridges and opening hearts to new ideas, and beneficial old ones, remains the essential trail for artists. The persistent allure of beauty and its transcendent attributes never fails to inspire. Our innate

desire for love remains ensconced in our psyche because it imagines love's redemptive power as being an important factor in our pursuit of emotional and spiritual fulfillment.

Understanding our cultural patrimony vis-à-vis the cultures of antiquity, as well as our present quest for peace and prosperity, is a central tenet of Unification Thought. Accordingly, there are five fundamental motives that artists should consider when undertaking their creative efforts:

An artist should have the attitude of wanting to comfort God, who has been grieving with sorrow throughout human history. God created human beings and the universe to obtain joy, and even endowed human beings with creativity

An artist should have the attitude of wanting to comfort the many sages and righteous people, especially Jesus, who walked the path of restoration with God.

An artist should have the attitude of wanting to express the deeds of the good and righteous people of the past and present. That is, the artist should have the attitude of cooperating with God's providence by portraying the deeds of those people who were, and still are, persecuted by the people in the sinful world.

An artist should herald the coming of the ideal world. Therefore, an artist should create works of art that express hope for and confidence about the future.

An artist should have the attitude of wanting to praise God, the Creator, by expressing the beauty and mystery of nature.^[15]

Our original mind informs us that without seeking God and godly virtues, especially true love born of a parental heart, we cannot achieve the culture of peace -- the proverbial "hope of all ages." Art and music that embody the attributes of truth, beauty and goodness have the potential to enrich our lives in profound ways.

As we attempt to fashion a Hyo Jeong Philosophy of Art, Rev. Moon's perspective provides salient guidance:

The ultimate goal of artists, and those who work with the arts, is to reach the world of God's heart. God, the Creator, wants to feel boundless joy through all the different things He personally created with His own hands, one by one, as works of art. God's heart is such that He wants to give again after He has given. After doing things for others He wants to do more for them, and even after investing unconditionally He wants to forget what He has done. That heart is the basis of the world of true love. God's ideal of creation for the created world arose from that heart. The starting point of art is the desire to represent that heart.

Accordingly, in the world of art there are no national boundaries. The purpose of art is not to serve as a tool of an ideology or an agenda. Its fundamental principles are harmony and unity. Divisiveness and conflict are fruits of fallen nature. Therefore the world of art demonstrates universal characteristics in all directions, bringing the East to understand the West and the West to accept the East.^[16]

This cultural vision of True Parents is now blossoming in the mountains of Korea, as the dream of Hyo Jeong culture is now being realized.

Notes

[1] "The Healing of the World: An Introduction to the Life and Teachings of Sun Myung Moon." <http://www.unification.net/misc/healing.html>

[2] MIDI is the acronym for Musical Instrument Digital Interfacing.

[3] Sun Myung Moon: As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen (Washington, D.C.: Washington Times Foundation, 2010), p. 157.

[4] David Tame, *The Secret Power of Music* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1984), p. 35.

[5] Roger Kimbal, "Schiller's Aesthetic Education," *The New Criterion*, March 2001. <https://www.newcriterion.com/issues/2001/3/schilleras-ldquo-aesthetic-educationrdquo>

[6] *ibid.*

[7] Roger Scruton: *The Intelligent Person's Guide to Modern Culture* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine Press, 2000), p. 31.

[8] Young Oon Kim, *Unification Theology and Christian Thought* (New York: Golden Gate Publishing, 1975), p. 181.

[9] Melanie Phillips, *The World Turned Upside Down: The Global Battle Over God, Truth, and Power* (New York: Encounter Books, 2010), pp. 261-262.

[10] Ibid.

[11] David P. Goldman, *How Civilizations Die* (Washington, DC: Regenery, 2011), pp. 249-250.

[12] Sun Myung Moon, *Cheon Seong Gyeong, Book 10* (Seoul, Korea: Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, 2014), p. 1065.

[13] Baruch Spinoza, in John Caird, *Philosophical Classics For English Readers*, edited by William Knight (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1888), Chapter I, p. 9.

[14] Richard Taruskin, *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 2009), p. 23.

[15] *New Essentials of Unification Thought*, (Tokyo: Unification Thought Institute, 2014), pp. 319-320.

[16] Cheon Seong Gyeong, *Book 10, Chapter 3: 316-070, 2000.02.09*, pp. 1079-1080.