What are some experiences that are aesthetically pleasing and why are they aesthetically pleasing?

In philosophy there are many types of value. Our focus is on aesthetic value, as opposed to ethical or economic value.

Our facilitator asked what live performances people had been to lately. One shared that he is going to see his friends in Funny Money at Theatrikos this weekend. Two had been to Sherlock’s Last Adventure, one had been to the symphony in the last month, and one remembered seeing the Nutcracker. Participants had been at two live performances held at the Sedona International Film Festival—Earth Wind and Fire concert and John Waters: this filthy world.

John Waters: this filthy world was interesting because there were very strong positive and negative reactions. Some thought it was hilarious while others were offended. This raises questions about whether artistic assessments are objective or subjective.

We make distinctions between different types of assessments. Opinions are considered more subjective, however judgments may be considered objective. A judgment suggests universality. Immanuel Kant, for example, thought judgments were reflective acts under a category, such as aesthetics or morals.
Is your experience/engagement with live art performances more enriching than those dealing with recorded/digital media? Why or why not?

- In this age we are saturated with images, but we are generally unskilled at interpreting images.
- At live performance individuals can choose where to focus their attention.
- Those who have filmed live events realize the subjective lens that they put on a live performance when they make choices about where the focus.
- One of the things that makes a live performance powerful is how the audience responds—this is especially the case with small local bands.
- You can go away from live performances you enter a reflective state that often helps you develop morally.
- Often what is most valuable about being at a live performance is the way that other people respond—this is especially the case if we are listening to live, local music.
- The institutional theory of art is the view that art is defined only in an institutional context.
- Art is transformative – and conversation can be as transformative as pottery and sculpture.

Is your experience/engagement with live art performances more enriching than those dealing with recorded/digital media? Why or why not?

- Art cultivates your soul and is an essential feature of a well-lived human life.
- Art is valuable but we are not socialized to value it the way we are socialized to value sports, medicine, or other social goods.
- Art is a crystallization of the human power of expression of the highest order. It suggests that a person is not merely a rational creature, but an expressive creature.