

TEXT 1**Pearls Before Breakfast**

By Gene Weingarten

1. He emerged from the metro at the L'Enfant Plaza station in Washington and positioned himself against a wall beside a trash basket. By most measures, he was nondescript: a youngish white man in jeans, a long-sleeved T-shirt and a Washington Nationals baseball cap. From a small case, he removed a violin. Placing the open case at his feet, he shrewdly threw in a few dollars and pocket change as seed money, swivelled it to face pedestrian traffic, and began to play.
2. It was 7:51 a.m. on Friday, January 12, the middle of the morning rush hour. In the next 43 minutes, as the violinist performed six classical pieces, 1 097 people passed by. Almost all of them were on the way to work. Each passerby had a quick choice to make, one familiar to commuters in any urban area where the occasional street performer is part of the cityscape: Do you stop and listen? Do you hurry past with a blend of guilt and irritation, aware of your cupidity¹ but annoyed by the unbidden demand on your time and your wallet? Do you throw in a buck, just to be polite? Does your decision change if he's really bad? What if he's really good? Do you have time for beauty? Shouldn't you? What's the moral mathematics of the moment?
3. No one knew it, but the fiddler standing against a bare wall outside the Metro was Joshua Bell, one of the finest classical musicians in the world, playing some of the most elegant music ever written on one of the most valuable violins ever made. His performance was arranged by The Washington Post as an experiment in context, perception and priorities. In a banal² setting at an inconvenient time, would beauty transcend³?
4. So, what do you think happened?
5. Three minutes went by before *something* happened. Sixty-three people had already passed when, finally, a middle-age man altered his gait for a split second, turning his head to notice that there seemed to be some guy playing music. Yes, the man kept walking, but it was something. It was not until six minutes into the performance that someone actually stood against a wall, and listened.
6. Things never got much better. In the three-quarters of an hour that Joshua Bell played, seven people stopped what they were doing to hang around and take in the performance, at least for a minute. Twenty-seven gave money, most of them on the run – for a total of \$32 and change. That leaves the 1 070 people who hurried by, oblivious, many only three feet away, few even turning to look. This for a man whose talents can command \$1 000 a minute.
7. It was all videotaped by a hidden camera. The people scurry by, cups of coffee in their hands, cellphones at their ears, ID tags slapping at their bellies, a grim *danse macabre* to indifference, inertia and the dingy, gray rush of modernity.
8. In his 2003 book, *Timeless Beauty: In the Arts and Everyday Life*, British author John Lane writes about the loss of the appreciation for beauty in the modern world. The experiment at L'Enfant Plaza may be symptomatic of that, he said – not because people didn't have the capacity to understand beauty, but because it was irrelevant to them.
9. 'This is about having the wrong priorities,' Lane said.

10. If we can't take the time out of our lives to stay a moment and listen to one of the best musicians on Earth play some of the best music ever written; if the surge of modern life so overpowers us that we are deaf and blind to something like that – then what else are we missing?

[*Washington Post* Staff Writer Sunday, 8 April 2007]

Glossary:

¹cupidity = greed, stinginess

²banal = commonplace, ordinary

³transcend = triumph, overcome

TEXT 2**Foodstagram: the restaurant trend that's driving New York chefs crazy**

They call it 'foodstagramming', and it's the curse of modern dining. Restaurant-goers who were once content to enjoy the flavours of their meals now seem unable to enjoy their evening without taking smartphone photographs of every dish and uploading them onto Facebook or Twitter. It's hard to know who is most irritated by amateur photography – the owners and chefs, the nearby diners or even the photographer's dining companions.

But now chefs are fighting back. Tired of seeing customers setting up camera tripods on their tables, or slapdash iPhone photos portraying the food in a bad light on social media, top New York cooks have banned photography in their premises.

"It's hard to build a memorable evening when flashes are flying every six minutes," Michelin-starred chef David Bouley told *The New York Times*. While such bans are rare in the UK, some leading British chefs say they share the frustrations of the US counterparts.

It can affect the atmosphere at the table if you're stopping at every course to take pictures, tweet or upload. Tom Aikens, who runs Tom Aikens Restaurant in Chelsea, said that if his premises were smaller and more intimate, he would be tempted to impose a ban because it can 'disturb the dining experience'. Referring to social media, he said he'd seen 'some pictures that don't do the food justice'.

However, some chefs derided the 'primadonna' Big Apple restaurateurs and their pretentious photo policies. Simon Rogan, of L'Enclume said the New Yorkers 'must have great ideas about themselves'. Aiden Byrne, who won a Michelin star at the age of 22, said there would be no such ban at The Church Green in Cheshire. "What are you going to do?" he said. "Start taking phones off people as they walk through the door? I've been on the receiving end of people putting bad pictures on [the internet], and I was upset – but you take it out on yourself and not the customer."

David Williams, writer of an influential food blog, feels differently: "When we went to Noma (in Copenhagen), every table had a camera – you would have to be really blasé about your eating experience not to."

[Source: Adapted from: <<http://www.independent.co.uk>>]

TEXT 3

Who's
the
FUR - est
of
Them
ALL?

www.inFURmation.com
respect for animals



TEXT 4

Who's skin are you in?

Fur belongs to the animal that was wearing it first

FURLESS.COM

CALL OUR HOTLINE
SHOW YOUR SUPPORT!
800.STOPFUR

The advertisement features a white background heavily splattered with red blood. The main headline 'Who's skin are you in?' is written in large, bold, black letters with a slight 3D effect. Below it, the text 'Fur belongs to the animal that was wearing it first' is in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom left, 'FURLESS.COM' is written in large, bold, white letters on a red background. At the bottom right, the text 'CALL OUR HOTLINE SHOW YOUR SUPPORT! 800.STOPFUR' is written in white, sans-serif font on a red background.

TEXT 5

What kind of person would steal a coat?

Every fur coat, trinket, and bit of trim causes an animal tremendous suffering – and takes their lives.

Compassion is the fashion.



TEXT 6



environmental activist

Most people choose fur for warmth and beauty.
But wearing fur also helps to protect nature, by
supporting people who live on the land.

Because they depend on nature for their
livelihoods, trappers have a direct interest
in protecting our forests and rivers.

They are the first to sound the
alarm when these vital wildlife
habitats are threatened.

For those of us who live in cities,
they are our 'eyes and ears' on the land.

That's one reason why the regulated and
sustainable use of wildlife is supported by the
international conservation authorities.

furisgreen.com 

**A new Vision of Fur
for an Eco-Conscious World**

BEAUTIFULLY CANADIAN 

 CONSEIL CANADIEN DE LA FOURRURE
FUR COUNCIL OF CANADA

TEXT 7

