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Structure, mechanisms and dynamics

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METAL SOAPS IN OIL PAINT

structure, mechanisms and dynamics

Joen Hermans

Metal soaps in oil paint

Structure, mechanisms and dynamics

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Metal soaps in oil paint

Structure, mechanisms and dynamics

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Structuur, mechanismen en dynamica

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aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus
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ten overstaan van een door het College voor Promoties ingestelde commissie,
in het openbaar te verdedigen in de Agnietenkapel
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door

Joen Jeremias Hermans

geboren te Valburg

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I have a friend who's an artist and has sometimes taken a view which I don't agree with very well. He'll hold up a flower and say "look how beautiful it is," and I'll agree. Then he says "I as an artist can see how beautiful this is but you as a scientist take this all apart and it becomes a dull thing," and I think that he's kind of nutty. First of all, the beauty that he sees is available to other people, and to me too, I believe. Although I might not be quite as refined aesthetically as he is, I can appreciate the beauty of a flower.

At the same time, […] I could imagine the cells in there, the complicated actions inside, which also have a beauty. I mean it's not just beauty at this dimension, at one centimeter; there's also beauty at smaller dimensions, in the inner structure, and also in the processes. The fact that the colours in the flower evolved in order to attract insects to pollinate it, is interesting; it means that insects can see the colour. It adds a question: does this aesthetic sense also exist in the lower forms? Why is it aesthetic? All kinds of interesting questions which the scientific knowledge only adds to the excitement, the mystery and the awe of a flower. It only adds! I don't understand how it subtracts.

—Richard Feynman

Please don't make the mistake of thinking the arts and sciences are at odds with one another. That is a recent, stupid, and damaging idea. You don't have to be unscientific to make beautiful art, or to write beautiful things. […] You don't need to be superstitious to be a poet. You don't need to hate GM technology to care about the beauty of the planet. You don't have to claim a soul to promote compassion. Science is not a body of knowledge nor a system of belief; it is just a term which describes humankind's incremental acquisition of understanding through observation.

Science is awesome.

—Tim Minchin

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