

Design Principles of Visual Awe

Based on Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*

Repetition

As things repeat themselves it adds layers of meaning, and can hint at vast processes that might make us feel awe — [Dacher Keltner](#)



[Temple of Warriors](#) - Chichen Itza, Mexico

Light/Dark contrast

The stunning shift from darkness to light can bring us awe.—[Dacher Keltner](#)



[Self-portrait in a flat cap](#), 1642 Rembrandt Van Rijn

Parts signal the presence of a holistic process

Evolution is crafting 'endless forms most beautiful' that have their purpose and function in our experience. —[Dacher Keltner](#)



[Anemone. Plate 49: Actiniae](#), 1904. Ernst Haeckl

Hints of vastness

When visual objects suggest there is a vast process around and beyond their visual form, you start to get a sense of infinity, vastness, mystery.—[Dacher Keltner](#)



[Sagrada Família](#), Barcelona, Spain