

## The beauty project

The project had begun one day on the bustling streets of the city. We decided to go Zen and be attentive to people's faces, their expressions, and what all these things could tell us. What stories could we tell about these people.

The idea grew stronger and took other shapes in our mind as we came everyday to our spot on the street and watched people. The more different they were, the more interesting they seemed. And those features who seemed to have quarreled with the usual notions of beauty became the focus of our investigation. We began wondering why certain things were more beautiful than the others? Why have we chosen to like the plastic image of supermodels instead of the diversity of all other human faces. Of course it all has to do with genes and what we perceive as being healthy is also perceived as being desirable. **Lines and wrinkles** can give a face depth and even a sort of glory. The **bags under the eyes** tell stories of our troubles of our long days of work, or our night without sleep. The **moles** give character. **Freckles** tell about one's immediate or long forgotten origin. **Dimples**, those lovely indentations in our cheeks that we only see in children, but we forget to see in grown-ups. And the heroic stories of **scars**. All of these are seen as undesirable, but are in fact the very things that set us apart and give each of us a strange and beautiful uniqueness. Of course we don't want to go to extremes and say that **warts, cold sores, styes, spots and pimples, and boils** have beauty, we don't deal in the grotesque, just the mundane. All these are signs of bad health so they can and should disappear.

So the next step was to establish a booth in the square near by and started paying compliments to people. First from the booth and then after other people had joined our venture, some of us started walking up to people and paying them a compliment. Some of them accepted to be photographed for a Catalogue of Ordinary Beauty, that we were planning to make.

Our project is growing and we have more and more ideas that can be put to good use in raising the confidence of people. The Buddhists say that we create our lives, one thought at a time, one action at a time, so we want to create a world with more beautiful people.

How can you do this? Pay somebody a heartfelt compliment about their looks. Take the time to see the beautiful features in all the faces you see and soon all people will seem much more good looking and your inner world will be brighter and more colourful.

