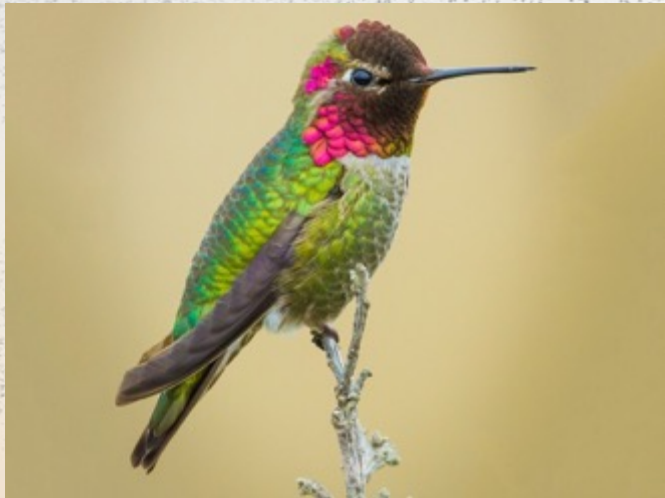


A large flock of birds is shown in flight, filling most of the frame. The birds are small, dark specks that form a dense, textured mass. The background is a gradient of light blue at the top and yellow at the bottom, suggesting a clear sky. The overall composition is dynamic and emphasizes the collective movement of the flock.

Birding for Beauty

There are lots of beautiful birds out there!



And then there are lots of birds like these—(LBBs*)



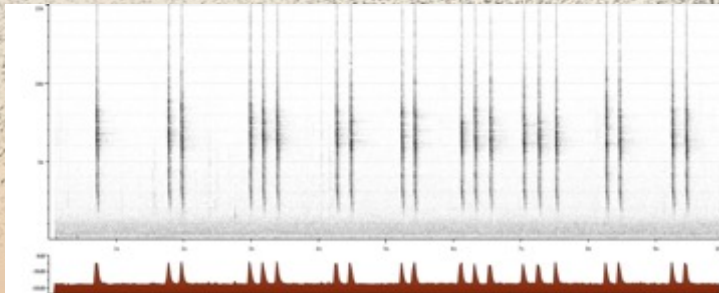
*** Little brown birds**

But they often have a secret power, an invisible beauty . . .

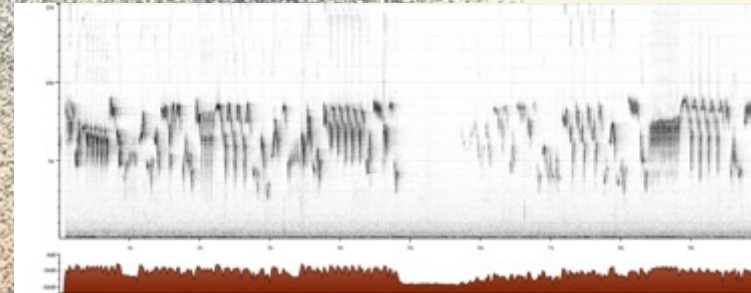
Pacific Wren



Call



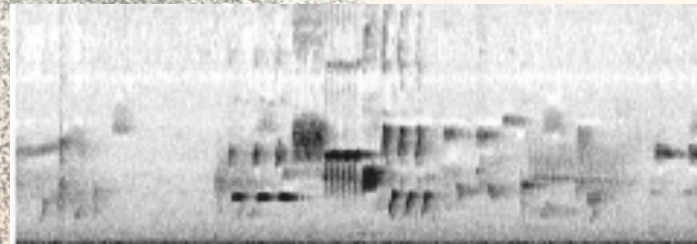
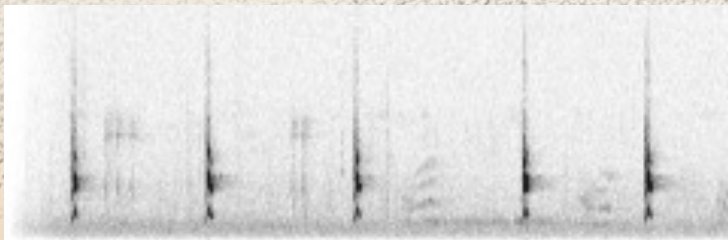
Song



Song sparrow



Call

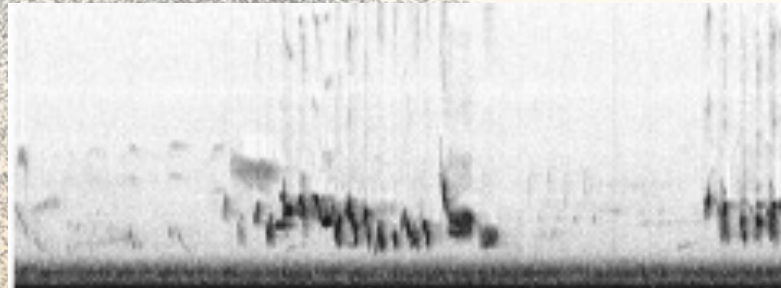
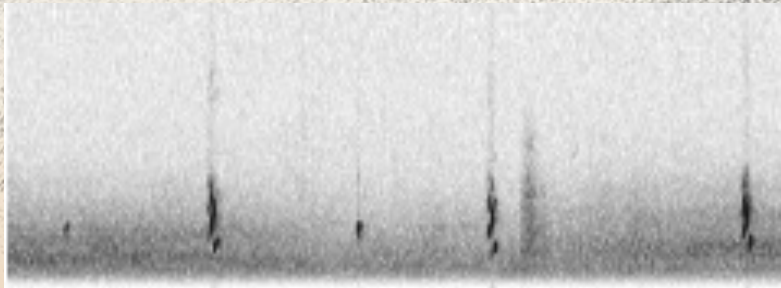


Song

House finch



Call



Song

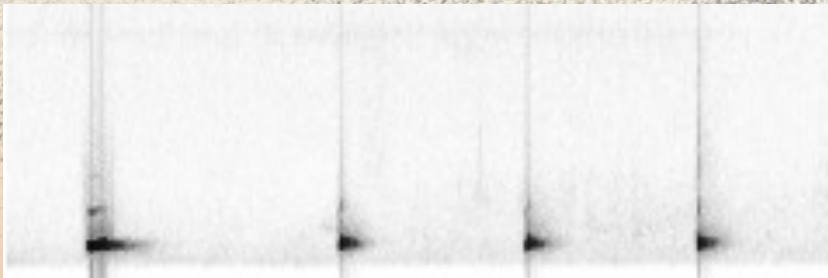
Hermit thrush



The song of the
hermit thrush
“affects us as part
of our unfallen
selves.”

~Thoreau

Call 

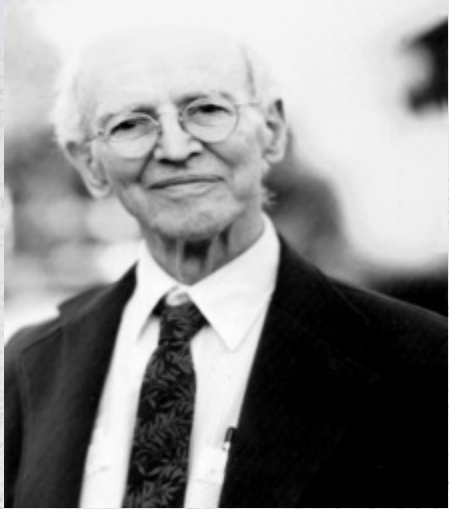


 Song



A large flock of birds is captured in flight against a light, hazy sky. The birds are densely packed in some areas, creating a textured, greyish cloud of movement. The overall scene is bright and airy, with a soft gradient from white at the top to a pale yellow at the bottom. The text is centered over the middle of the image.

**What is it about the song that makes
it sound more beautiful than the call?**



Charles Hartshorne

Theologian
and
ornithologist

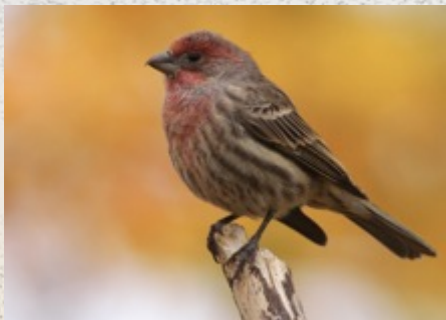
“We shall never understand ourselves or any other animal in a fully satisfactory way until we see that all activity is motivated by the sense of possible harmonies and by the flight from the twin evils of discord and monotony.”

--Born to Sing: An Interpretation and World Survey of Birdsong (1973)

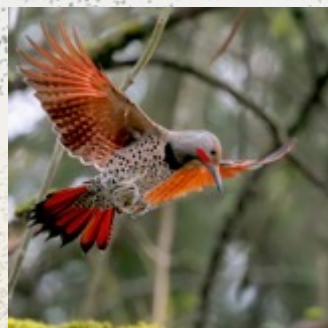
The quest for harmony or unity in diversity

With sufficient intensity and contrast

Visual

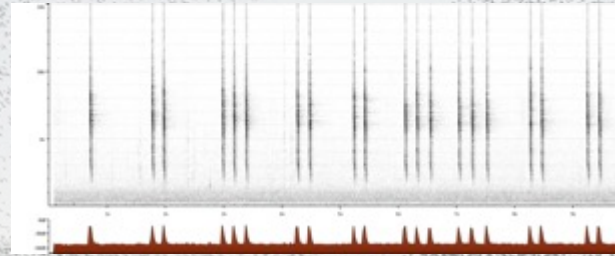


Relative
monotony

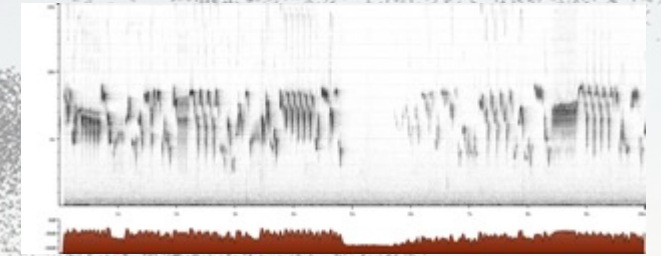


Relative
intensity &
contrast =
beauty

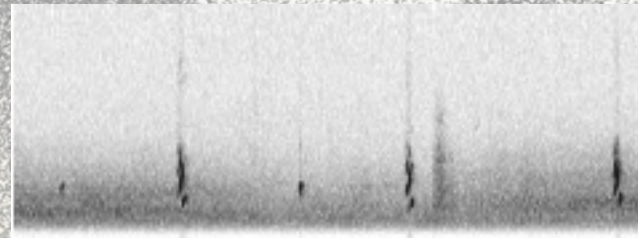
Auditory



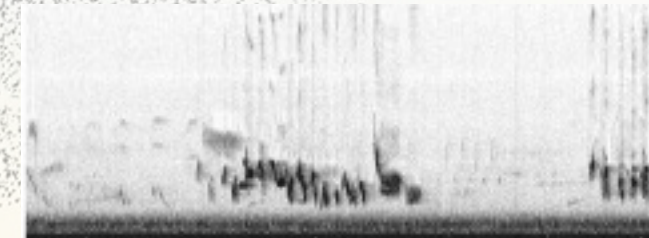
Calls



Songs



Relative
monotony



Relative
intensity &
contrast =
beauty

A “miraculous balance”



Alfred North Whitehead

Scientist
and
philosopher

In which *“the whole displays its component parts, each with its own value enhanced; and the parts lead up to the whole, which is beyond themselves, and yet not destructive of themselves.”*

--Modes of Thought (1938)

Unity in diversity

individual organisms



Each one being a somewhat “beautiful” achievement

Unity in diversity



***“The teleology of the universe
is directed to the production
of beauty.”***

--Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (1933)

Moral beauty?

“Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For He makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, And sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. . . Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Matthew 5:43-48

“perfect” = complete, whole

A being whose diverse, contrasting parts and experiences are integrated into a harmonious and intensely alive whole

•• *A beautiful being*

Creating an ever more beautiful Body of Christ



**Regarding the notion of the parts being coordinated
into an effective whole . . .
a murmuration of starlings**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4f_1_r80RY