



LOVE at first sight

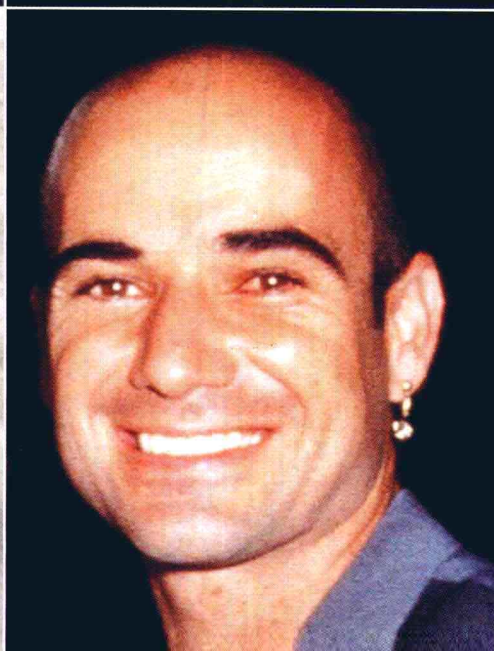
why you love who you love



S U Z I M A L I N

LOVE
at first
sight

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LOVE at first sight

S U Z I M A L I N





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*Dedicated with love to my mother
and to my husband and two children*

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In My Own Words

One might suppose that a painted portrait and a photographic portrait are created with the same aim: to convey a likeness of the sitter. But there is an essential and important difference between the two. The portrait painter can isolate an expression captured in the eyes at any given moment and marry it with a fleeting expression in the mouth seen at another time. Hence the artist conveys what he or she perceives about the sitter's personality, be it wisdom, kindness, humility, or any one of a hundred attributes. In this way the painter is able to impart layers of information about a person within a single painting so that the viewer receives so much silent data that they "know" the sitter and are at once intimate with the essence of the subject. This is not distortion but merely artistic interpretation.

The photographer traps the expression of the eyes and the mouth at exactly the same time, freezing reality in a single moment. Here lies the difference: a photograph captures reality while a painting is the artist's interpretation of it. Working with other people's photographs is rather like working with *objets trouvés* – found objects. The French artist Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968) worked with found objects. He had nothing to do with their creation; his art lay in the reinterpretation of those objects. The photographs I have used in this book are also "found" and therefore not styled for my use, nor taken with lighting to suit my convenience. Executed by others, cut up and reformed to create a new singular entity, these photographs assume a life of their own.

MY BACKGROUND AS A PAINTER

I specialize in portraying men. For most of my adult life I have sat in a studio, observing and painting. I have attempted to understand the mystery of the face and to penetrate its unspoken depths. In the face, repeated rhythms emerge: physical echoes, genetic patterns, and mathematical forms. I always try to gain an insight into the sitter's inner mechanism, which helps me to depict his image. I arrange to meet his wife, and this frequently helps toward an insight into the inner man, the "adult child" within. My sitter furnishes me with photographs of his parents, in particular of his mother. This is important because I can see how much of his face is inherited and how much is shaped by the man himself, his environment, and his experiences.

Some years ago, I began to notice the facial patterns of my sitter and how they appeared to affect his choice of partner. I became aware of the shapes and proportions within his wife's face, his mother's, and his own. It was like pieces in a jigsaw and, in anticipation of meeting a wife, I had an idea of what she might look like. Character is usually written in the eyes, while nature is seen around the mouth. The face does not lie, and much is written there. George Orwell said that by the time we reach forty, our faces can be read like a book. As an artist, however, I will not have had the benefit of reading the preceding chapters of the book – the sitter's emotional and family history. It is the photographs of parents and weddings that are my reference.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

While I was at the Slade School of Fine Art in London, I wrote to the painter Lucian Freud who then visited me in my studio. After reviewing my work, he advised me not to be influenced by the Euston Road School which advocated a mathematical approach to painting if I was not happy working in that way. He recommended that I paint one area of the face to completion before going on to the next. I began to work additively, feeling my way slowly around the sitter's face, understanding each little part before continuing further. Working in this way led me to become a painter of detailed realism. As I became more familiar with each sitter, gaining greater insight into his personality and character, I was fascinated by how these were expressed on the face. For me, every face is a landscape, and I explore every inch of it as my eyes pass over its hills and valleys. Every feature and the spaces in between are instilled with meaning, and pieced together they brought me a little closer to understanding what it is that makes each person fascinating and unique. Ultimately, this led me to the discovery of the three visual love categories: Harmonism, Echoism, and Prima Copulism.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

I could not hear him. I could not smell him. I could only see him. From thirty yards away, across the lobby of a crowded room, I fell in love. No moment affected my life more. We were married exactly four weeks to the day that we met. That was almost twenty years ago. Why him? Why me? What was it that drew me? Instant recognition? Magic? A unique bond? Perhaps love's magic is not a mystery after all but initiated by visual forces. Perhaps whom we choose to love is not so random, but destined from the cradle.

Seeking love and its meaning

The word “love” means different things to different people. When a person tells someone, “I love you”, what that person means by love, and what the recipient expects from love, may differ widely, running the full gamut from the unconditional love that a parent may have for a child to sentiment, habit, passion, physical longing, emotional dependence, and so on.

Although I have named my three visual groups the “love categories”, of course they could just as easily be called “attraction categories”. It is only human to hope that initial attraction may be the starting point to lasting love.

How many times have you looked at a couple and wondered, “what does she see in him, or he in her?” The visual love categories revealed in *Love at First Sight* seek to explain what one person “sees” in another. As you peruse the studies in the book, bear in mind that visual attraction is only the starting point for a love match. Personality, character, integrity, wit, charm, sense of humour, charisma, sexual attraction, and so many other attributes and behavioural characteristics are the necessary components of any successful and enduring partnership. To suppose (or hope) otherwise would be foolish.

This book is not suggesting for one moment that by having harmonism, echoism, or prima copulism with a person, a successful love match or relationship will automatically ensue. But by being alive to them and including them in our awareness, we can perhaps come a little closer to understanding the visual triggers of attraction that may lead to love.

My research has shown that the three visual love categories apply to all, be they young or old, thin or fat, pretty or plain, straight or gay. Everyone has their match. Just as there are rhythms in nature, so too are there rhythms in the face. Everyone’s physiognomical match is out there, waiting to discover its complement.

I am an artist by instinct and profession, and neither psychologist nor anthropologist, yet studying the visual nature of attraction has led me to ponder how it might be associated with the behavioural aspects of love. Perhaps the visual manner in which a man is attracted to a woman determines the kind of love he comes to feel for her. In other words, is how a person is loved a consequence of how they were first attracted to their partner in the beginning? Might men and women assume different roles according to the visual category in which that love occurred? Might a woman be a different person if she were loved in a harmonist way; how might she behave if she were loved in an echoist manner? Would a man have the same love relationship with his harmonist match as with his prima copulist match? I continue to ponder these questions.

A great many people find love and happiness for reasons that have nothing to do with the visual love categories. They may have a joint passion for ornithology, a mutual interest in music, or enjoy shared intellectual endeavour. This “rational” love is an evolving love, based on warmth and friendship. Its beginnings are slow and steady but it can be as strong as the love that has its beginnings in visual attraction (see p 11 Slow Love).

THE CATEGORIES EMERGE

I was painting a portrait of Diana, Princess of Wales after her death. Every time I lowered my head from the canvas to my palette, I caught sight of a picture of Prince Charles that was staring at me from the front page of a discarded newspaper. I did this so frequently that after a while, their images seemed to merge.

The similarities I had noticed in Charles and Diana led me to re-examine other couples in the hope of finding a pattern. Over the years I have painted numerous portraits. Photographs of these and my own photographic library gave me the opportunity to cut up, compare, and analyse thousands of images of facial features, especially noses, eyes, and mouths.

Strong patterns began to fall into place and thus the first category emerged: Harmonism, in which the key facial characteristics of two people have similar proportions but are not similarly shaped.

Some while later, a photograph in a weekend newspaper captioned, “Who is this?” caught my eye. The picture was of a woman wheeling a pram. I could see at once that it was Camilla Parker Bowles as a young woman. I was wrong. The photograph was of Prince Charles’s nanny, Mabel Anderson, shown there in her twenties, at approximately the same age as Camilla was when she first met Charles. Many people have

asked how the most eligible man in the world, married to the most glamorous woman in the world, could love another. The answer perhaps lay in the cradle. I knew that Sigmund Freud had written about attachment to the first bond (prima copula). Complex and complicated, the relationship with this significant figure colours all subsequent relationships. I was instantly struck with the possibility that there could be a visual trigger in later years to this first emotional bond. After examining many more couples for this link, the second category emerged: Prima Copulism, in which a person is attracted to someone who resembles their first bond.

The third category was much more difficult to establish. Plato claimed that God punished our earliest ancestors by cutting each in half. They longed to be reunited with their “other half”, and when they found it fell in love. I had already identified that certain couples looked alike, but it was difficult to trace any pattern or to determine which particular “visual echoes” were the dominant ones in showing similarity between two people.

After analysing hundreds of “similar looking” couples, I was amazed to discover that it was always the same three shapes that contributed most to their likeness: features that appeared to “echo” from the face of one partner to that of the other. Thus emerged Echoism, the third and most common of the visual love categories.

Visual attraction is just the starting point for a love match. Integrity, humour, and other attributes are necessary components of any lasting partnership.

The three visual love categories

HARMONISM *proportion*

In harmonism, the two people will share similar facial proportions. This means that the relative distances between the forehead and bridge of nose, base of nose and mouth, and mouth and chin will be approximately the same. This is a mathematical subconscious pairing of physical types. When the distances between the main facial features are similar, the underlying head shapes are the same. Note that harmonists do not resemble each other unless they also have a degree of echoism.

ECHOISM *shape*

In echoism, the two people will resemble each other. The resemblance is caused by the echo of the shapes seen in three particular features. They are the upper eyelid line (from which the upper eyelashes grow), the upper lip line (the curve of pink lip on the edge where it meets the “moustache area”), and the eyebrow (not its upper or lower line but its general shape or sweep). The relative size of the features is not relevant: it is the shapes alone that determine echoism. Bear in mind also that the thickness of the lips does not signify. Lips thin with age and it is worth remembering this if one of the two people is older. The best echoist match is made with all three markers present. Two may suffice but the echoism may be less strong.

PRIMA COPULISM *first bond*

In prima copulism, a person will be attracted to someone who resembles their first bond. For men, the first bond is most likely to have been his mother or other close female relative, or perhaps his nanny; for women, it is usually her father or other close male relative. Facial proportions and shapes are not relevant: the resemblance lies in the “look” or demeanour of a person. In both harmonism and echoism, the attraction is often mutual because the one subconsciously recognizes similar proportions or shapes in the other’s face. In prima copulist love, the object of desire usually does not feel reciprocal attraction at the start. A man cannot be won over but a woman may be eventually.

HAVING IT ALL

Can we have it all? The answer is affirmative since a couple may have aspects of all three visual love categories. For example, if a man’s female partner resembles his first bond (say, his mother) there is a prima copulist element in the relationship. If the couple also share a degree of harmonism and echoism, then they are fortunate to have it all. There are of course different permutations of prima copulist love. With modern perspectives on sexuality, other interpretations of the first bond may bring new dimensions to the concept of “having it all”.

*My concept of the visual love categories emerged from **years of painting men** and noticing how their **facial patterns** appeared to affect their **love choices**.*

HOW WE FALL IN LOVE

Much research has been conducted into what attracts men and women to each other, and the way we fall in love. It is generally agreed that a man falls in love first with what he sees but that a woman can be “won over” by a man to whom she is not initially attracted.

Even when physical attraction and appeal are important to a woman, they have (at least in the early stages of a relationship) a far greater significance for a man. Indeed, if a man finds a woman attractive, it may not mean that he wants to get to know her or is looking for a deeper relationship with her. For men, then, the initial visual stimuli are the springboard from which a relationship may develop, given time. For many women, the way a man treats her and the way in which he responds to her can create the right emotional “climate” from which a physical attraction to him evolves.

Social psychologist Ayala Malach Pines has conducted extensive research into the gender processes of falling in love. In *Falling in Love: Why We Choose the Lovers We Choose*, she explains it like this: “A significant difference divided the genders. Men were more often initially attracted to the physical appearance of the woman, followed by a discovery of their personalities. Women, on the other hand, frequently felt no attraction. The attraction followed the development of friendship and emotional intimacy. To put it bluntly, for men the physical attraction caused the relationship; for many women the relationship caused the physical attraction.” Similarly Bertrand Russell wrote (1930) in *Conquest of Happiness*: “on the whole women tend to love men for their character while men tend to love women for their appearance.”

The non-visual category

SLOW LOVE

In addition to the visual love categories, there is one other love group which has to do with a “non-visual” attraction between two people. This does not for one moment mean that the partners are not attractive, merely that the way they look is not fundamental to their coupling. I have called this Slow Love.

People in the slow love category do not have any facial similarities at all, either in the shapes of their main features or in the proportions on their faces. Nor does prima copulism play a part since neither partner will resemble the other’s first bond. Slow love is an attraction based on warmth and friendship. It is an evolving love, often unrecognized by the two people in its early stages. Then it may begin to dawn on the couple that the other person could indeed be “the one” for them.

This love category is often based on shared interests or lifestyles – a hobby, profession, politics, background, or religion – and is an altogether more “rational” love than that of the visual categories. Its foundations tend to be firm, grounded in reality, unlike the instant and urgent love of prima copulism.

Often two people who have the same goals and aspirations can be united within this category. Theirs is a partnership of shared horizons, and because of this the couple can devote themselves to the practicalities of life and overcome its everyday hurdles outside the intimacy of the home.

Some words in conclusion

HAPPY EVER AFTER

Love has become part of our popular culture. If it were an industry, it would probably be the most profitable one of all time. Love sells magazines, films, and books. Longing for it, celebrating it, mourning its loss have become the background music of our lives.

We hear so much about “love” that it is easy to get things out of perspective. But the success of a relationship depends not simply on being able to give and receive love. As a couple we need to stay constant and weather the storms that life throws at us. When things get rough, it is good to remember that love flourishes best in a climate of trust and mutual respect. No matter how strong the initial attraction and how deep a love develops, nobody can predict the future of a relationship. Some partners can handle major storms and emerge stronger as a couple; others founder on the rocks of a minor transgression. The burden of celebrity may not be an issue for you but it can put a great strain on the relationship of those in the spotlight.

CHANGING YOUR LOOKS

Many people turn to cosmetic procedures or surgery to improve aspects of their looks with which they are unhappy, or to cheat nature and halt the ageing process. But can this affect the responses of those we would wish to attract?

The journey of this book is the belief that the face carries past history and present identity which subconsciously attracts another who recognizes these markers. Cosmetic surgery may change the face in such a way that it no longer reflects the true inner person.

It is rare that surgically altering one feature does not affect surrounding areas of the face, and changes to these areas may remove even more details of personal description. Nose surgery can sometimes alter the inner corner of the eye and its surrounding areas. This will of course influence the overall appearance of the eye. Sometimes more than one procedure will be carried out at the same time which will impact on different areas of the face. This can radically affect a person’s ability to determine the individual and unique identity of another through the subconscious reading of the face. In effect it will present partners or potential partners with a “false” reading of a person’s inner mechanism.

The response to a surgically altered face and its changed characteristics varies within each of the visual love categories. Trying to match features that may never be the same again may lead to disappointments. In the harmonist group, however, a reading will not be affected unless the proportions of the underlying bone structure are altered. It is as well to remember that in echoist attraction, there is a distinct and positive advantage to having a face that does not conform to popular ideals of physical perfection. The less surgically altered the face, the easier it is for the subconscious to identify the echoes within the face.

Alteration to the peripheries of the face does not affect the look of its centre. In other words, neck lifts, ear pinning, and lower chin work should not affect the initial response to the face. Neither does surface surgery such as the removal of moles or scars, or dermabrasion.

*The journey of this book is the belief that the face carries past history and **present identity**. What is it **within the face** that stirs another to love?*

PEOPLE WATCHING PEOPLE

Across the world, the phenomenon of the “café society” or culture has grown in recent years. Many a happy hour can be filled with pleasure just watching people go by.

Now this idle pleasure can be transformed into an engaging pastime. The revelations brought about by identifying the visual love categories afford the added pleasure of trying to pair two people and determine into which visual love category a couple may fit. Of course you will not be able to determine a possible prima copulist attraction just from seeing a couple on their own, but if the two people are part of a family group, it can be fascinating to try to work out what relationship there is between them, and if any prima copulism exists.

Attempting to spot a harmonist match can be more difficult. It is not easy to try to gauge proportions while sitting in a bar or waiting for a train unless you have been trained in visual processes. While you are looking through the studies in this book, you will notice that I have frequently provided information about the visual similarities of a couple in addition to the shape and proportion markers that determine an echoist or harmonist match. This may help you to “get your eye in” as you are learning to recognize the basic criteria for finding a match. Once these are established, it becomes quite easy to notice other similarities in a couple.

Echoism is by far the largest category within the visual love groups, and echoist couples are undoubtedly the easiest to spot. Remember that at least two out of the three markers are necessary to establish a match, and that the relative size of the features is not important. A couple with large eyes and small eyes can still have echoism as long as the shape of the upper eyelid line is the same.

In researching *Love at First Sight*, I have come across countless examples of echoist pairings among well-known people and celebrities in popular magazines and the society pages of glossy periodicals. Many appear in this book, and with good reason since their inclusion serves a valid purpose. High-profile celebrity couples are apparently a source of endless fascination. How they live, what they do, and why they stay together makes for absorbing (if at times incredulous) reading. Reading about the visual love categories, and how people fit into them, would not be nearly so interesting if one knew nothing about the couple’s lives.

There is a tendency in life to see only what we wish to see. By the use of photography, you can study what may not be available to the naked eye, thereby focusing on faces frozen in the same perspective. An entire book may be required to explain, deny, or justify the pull of a relationship. A single photograph can offer a glimpse of reality that tells all.

Harm

onism

When a man or woman is attracted to their harmonist match, there is a good chance that the attraction will be reciprocated because both parties will share the same characteristics of facial proportion.

What is a harmonist?

A harmonist has a face that shares the same proportions as that of their partner. They do not have similarly shaped features but the spacing and distance between their key features is similar. Partners with harmonism may not look alike, so a harmonist couple is not easy to spot at a glance.

What is harmonism?

Harmonism occurs when individuals unwittingly pair with someone who has similar facial proportions. They like the way the other person looks and feel physically compatible. Harmonists often complement each other socially, each drawing strength and confidence from the other's presence.

For people who are shy by nature, it is a tremendous bonus to have a partner with whom they feel comfortable when they appear in public. Many high-profile individuals who feel lonely or isolated by their celebrity status choose harmonist partners. As often as not, these celebrity couplings tend to be based on aesthetics and such couples fit well together within their social group.

Harmonism can and does work for many couples, but it also suffers a high casualty rate because the initial relationship is based on looks. Time erodes beauty, and unless the partners are fortunate enough to find the "beauty within", their love may ultimately dwindle or die. For the majority, however, harmonism works well, and not being in the limelight is a blessing if difficulties do occur.