

The crow has flown away:
swaying in the evening sun,
a leafless tree.

The haiku is an example of an effortless, subtle, yet complex aesthetic representing an attempt at perfection. Shibui (adj), Shibumi (noun). To appreciate true Shibumi one must clear ones mind of false thoughts.

It is our self-identity that filters our perspective of the world to match our expectations. We see what we want to see based on our beliefs. Shibumi suggests a quality of perfection hidden in the appearance of simplicity. The subtle nuances of a "Shibumi" are often not recognized at first glance. One may need to look over and over before attaining the gentle brilliance of design. The more subtle nuance you are able to detect the more the filter of your mind shifts its hue.

On the mat, it is in our conservation of movement that we cultivate the subtle nuance of perfection. It is in our quest for non-interference that we turn the mechanical movement of form into the free wind of waza. It is in our unrelenting pursuit of the "secret science" that we one day are considered "masters" of Ju. Pure Ju, non-resistance, is itself complex yet at its core simplistic. There is no place for effort in the art of gentleness. But we know better.

In life, endeavor to find the subtle perfection in everyday tasks. Reduce the number of steps required to accomplish happiness by finding the beauty in simple, natural phenomena like a tree, a full moon, a wave or a "departing crow."

Effortless, simple, elegant, unforced, naturally perfect. Shibui.

By virtue of being, we ourselves are complex yet perfected in simplicity. We often just don't see it.

Keep training. Keep appreciating. Keep looking.