Rev's Reflections

Here it is, the last weekend of 2023. Conventional wisdom tells us this is the time when we are supposed to look back nostalgically at the ending year, calling to mind all the highs and lows, the births and deaths, and the milestones that gave the year its character.

Personally, I have two favorite ways of looking back at the year, both of which allow me to read the "temperature" of popular culture through two things I love. One looks back from the end of the year, naming a trend; and the other looked ahead at the beginning of the year, anticipating one.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, founded in Springfield, Mass, "authentic," was the most searched word of 2023. Given how much of our public life is one big pendulum swing, it's not entirely surprising, given that the word of 2022 was "gaslighting." With threats of AI looming large, and identity politics at a fever pitch the best thing we can be, the best way we can be, is fully ourselves without any pretense.

If we're to be authentic, we better know what it means: *real, actual; true to one's own personality, spirit or character.*

Pantone, the progenitors of a color matching system used by artists and designers, last December named "viva magenta" the color of the year. It's a bold pink, with a lot of red. Pantone anticipated it would be everywhere. I never noticed it, but a softer version of it, a color I would call "Barbie-doll pink" was everywhere in the wake of Greta Gerwig's summer hit movie. I even bought a suit in that color. The trend toward blush tones must be continuing because "peach fuzz," a color that needs no verbal description has been named the color for 2024.

Looking back and ahead at words and colors, it would appear that maybe we are softening, and seeking to have more genuine relationships. Let's hope that's true for the coming year. We need more softness and more realness in the world.

In Peace,
Rev Denis