

Re: Q: Civil Society & the Arts

Redaktion

Responses to Kris Groberg:

Topic of Civil Society & the Arts: "What happens to a society when support for the Arts is removed in favour of, say, athletics or the military [...]?"

[1]

From: Paul T. Werner <paul.werner@nyu.edu>

There seem to be two horses in the running, here: a) Whether art is more useful than, say warfare, and b) whether art is useful at all. Then again, there's a very long history of blending those two questions, in classic, deeply influential works in the history of Eurocentric thought. You should find some good material in Castiglione's Book of the Courtier (1528) and in Schiller's brief speech, "Die Schaubühne Als Moralische Anstalt betrachtet" (The Theater as Moral Institution) of 1784; Schiller's longer but better-known "Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Mankind" might be easier to dig up, sections of it were very popular in England.

Mostly, though, I would recommend Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "Discourse on Science and Art" of 1750, and the wide controversy it aroused. Rousseau was handed a "loaded" question, very much like the one you've been given, and he made his fame by not taking the bait.

There is some discussion of these issues in my forthcoming (any day, now) book "Museum, Inc.: Inside the Global Art World."

Cordially,
Paul T. Werner, New York

[2]

From: Paul Schulte <dagda2@cox.net>

You might address the fact that when the Greeks needed military assistance they melted down their statues for war materials. You might deal with where art is on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. There was a huge debate in Congress about the first art that was purchased by the United States government.

The big question was should we be buying art with public money. Some art subsidies are for niche markets. There is a small audience for opera, yet they get as much money as other arts groups, etc. Artists would work whether they got public monies or not. They always did before and they will now. Public art is "art by committee." Some committee has to decide whether to buy it or not, so public art becomes bland. That is hardly civilizing.

Paul Schulte
Arizona Educational Consultants
Gilbert, AZ

[3]

From: Corinna Criticos <ccriticos@gmx.tm>

Dear Colleague,

in Dessau at the moment there is an exhibit called "Kopie, Reproduction, Nachbildung. Wege der Kunstvermittlung in der Zeit der Aufklärung" which seems to be an interesting historical precedent to art education. It's part of a series of exhibits and initiatives on the 18th century in Sachsen-Anhalt.

Galerie am Grauen Haus
2 Juli - 25 september 2005
For more information: ksdw@ksdw.de, also www.gartenreich.com

Sincerely,
Dr. Corinna Criticos
ccriticos@gmx.tm

Reference:

Q: Re: Q: Civil Society & the Arts. In: ArtHist.net, Sep 7, 2005 (accessed Sep 21, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/27536>>.