

## Does Art Matter?

Open Space Discussion 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hutchins School Oct 18, 2009

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Students ask I class on radical politics and culture: Why do we study these “loser” depressive artists? Who cares? Get to politics!

- Art provides ways to make change one’s own: helps people see in new ways.
- Changing/saving lives of people through art—Martin Luther King matter of course, but wouldn’t be without the traditions of song and poetry
- Changes or reflects social change?
- Brings people together
- But since 70’s: fragmentation of arts and politics.
- Consumers today-so much commoditization- but feel a reaction is coming...oooh but will that be marketed?
- One reaction artists doing it in the sewers to escape commoditization
- So Nike will film a commercial there
- But we LOVE the diversity- not one size fits all
- yet what have we in common?
- Things change so fast-drive to be different-“the shock of the new”
- So maybe it isn’t about that –it’s about PERSONAL VISION.
- Commercialism is nothing new. Papa Hayden was a servant, Rivera worked for Rockefeller
- Anything can be art-great- Duchamp’s Urinal- our students sculptured mixed media for class
- But what –if anything- is art, everyone is an artist-what is “good” or great or meaningful art?
- Good art changes how you see the world
- Doing art changes YOU.

-Venezuela: youth orchestras- El Sistema- gives disadvantaged kids opportunity to learn, express, help them find a role, purpose and pleasure of making music

-Aesthetic pleasure-value in itself? YES—human

-Sack's book- Musicophilia – it's wired into us to appreciate music.

-Social relations reflected in music-egalitarian societies with music without soloists.

-jazz both-take lead, with groups, change parts spontaneously.

-Individual society: a contradiction?

-Any "Hegelian" synthesis?

-Art system a "conversation" between tiny [?] group of critics/artists/academics

-Could have different environment/education in arts.