

Creative Agitation: A Proposal
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Forward

The artist who is also an activist is trapped in an awkward middle ground. Within the world of action, art is always second in stature to the needs of the movement, as it should be. In the worlds of art, whether high or low, politics is always second in stature to commercialism or formalism, both of which are expressions of the same class rule. The truly political artist is left stranded in the space between these worlds, with a muted, often frustrated voice.

The movement demands urgency, which is nearly always at loggerheads with the manner of inspiration that even political art demands. Art and the movement exist on different time signatures and both are the poorer for it. Yet propaganda, in its highest forms of expression, is nearly always artful.

Art, meanwhile, is at a moment of historic crisis, mirroring the deepening crisis within capitalist society itself. This crisis is directly connected to the class character of art in our society.

Marx wrote: “ The class which is the material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force.” Culture is likewise contained within this definition.

The art of today is the art of the ruling class. Whether high art or commercial art, all the ruling institutions of culture are expressions of the same class identity and interest. Both demand education, resources, connections, and time that only a tiny, ruling elite can possibly afford. Both are heaved like projectiles over high fortress walls. They differ only in target and rate of exploitation.

High art is created by a minority class for a minority class audience. A minority class creates commercial art for a majority class audience. Popular culture, as the term is presently applied, is therefore a myth and a condescending lie.

It is commonly asserted that art has reached its limit. Everything has already been said, created, achieved. Indeed, it could be said we are in the post-art period, dominated by post-movements, post-post-movements and the ceaseless migration towards sharper alienation.

This is an expression of a simple fact: in the same way the ruling class has begun to exhaust the natural resources of the planet, the ruling class has likewise exhausted its forms of creative expression. If capitalism is an unsustainable form of development, its art is likewise dead and unsustainable.

The problem is not that art has reached its limit, but that ruling class art has reached its limits. In the present epoch, art is strictly a minority activity. What

magnificent forms will creative expression take, when the other 99% of humanity finally has the heel lifted from its throat?

The moment has arrived for artists to accept their quota of struggle so that the people may someday receive their quota of art.

Much of this is well understood within the movement. The art world is meanwhile busy counting colors.

What follows is a proposal for a new organization instigated by the broader crisis in capitalist society and its attendant culture.

The Principals of Creative Agitation

Creative Agitation seeks to unify the creative and political act in absolute equality. In so doing, it seeks to strengthen the vibrancy of both.

Anonymity is a virtue. The movement should be the author.

Any and all may join Creative Agitation. Membership is defined by action. In any and all events, material aid to Imperialism is an unpardonable transgression.

Creative Agitation will be organized in such a way to help unify the temporal clash between art and the movement. Therefore work will be organized into large thematic campaigns, lasting several months or longer, as well as rapid response actions, in response to unexpected and urgent needs.

The group has set itself the task of organizing a laboratory of creative political expression. The group will explore the use of any and all creative media, organized into semi-autonomous, artist led brigades using traditional and new media, based on the knowledge, skills, and interests of group members.

Each brigade will be responsible for organizing practical creative workshops for members of other brigades with the aim both of raising the cultural level of all while also instigating the discovery of new hybrid forms.

Creative Agitation has a special obligation to oppose any manifestation of reactionary culture, particularly those that present "apolitical" bourgeois artists as politically neutral.

Bourgeois art and bourgeois art events should endlessly be turned against themselves.

An urgent task of Creative Agitation will be the organization of Public Art Defense Leagues that can respond rapidly and forcefully to endangered Public Art.

Creative Agitation above all else will strive towards bold, concrete proposals, inspiring enactments of different models of human existence; a combustible sphere where art and action collide, and where the truly imaginative capacities of creativity can finally be put to meaningful use.