



“ART IS NOT A MIRROR HELD UP TO REALITY
BUT A HAMMER WITH WHICH TO SHAPE IT.”

(BERTOLD BRECHT)

In her inspiring manifesto on artists' rights, Tania Bruguera was deeply reflecting upon *artistic freedom and cultural rights* (December 6, 2012).

To her, *Art is a basic social need to which everyone has a right; a way of being aware of oneself and of the others at the same time. Art is a methodology in constant transformation for the search of a here and now.*

But more than anything: ***art is an invitation to questioning***

And so is Eyes of Europe as we have kept repeating and insisting for two decades now. Eyes of Europe *is* about art, about European culture, about the future, about a European lifestyle and about a totally new approach to European education and the history of *arts*.

Art is not only a statement of the present, it is also a call for a different future, a better one. Therefore, it is a right not only to enjoy art, but to be able to create it.

As it is, E.o.E. is also anxious to creating a new lifestyle and a new way of approaching art, of ***learning how to learn***. It is basically a self-learning platform for young ambitious autodidacts with a fascination for ethics and esthetics.

Art is a space of vulnerability from which what is social is deconstructed to construct what is human.

To construct what is human is also basically at the heart of E.o.E's ambition.

Artists not only have the right to dissent, but the duty to do so. Artists have the right to dissent not only from affective, moral, philosophical, or cultural aspects, but also from economic and political ones. Artists have the right to disagree with power. If the artist's proposal is not understood, it should be discussed by all, not censored by a few.

ART SHOULD STIMULATE CRITICISM AND CALL FOR PUBLIC DEBATE.

In all this, E.o.E. proves the exact pendant and partner of art. As a free forum, a virtual democratic agora in which young Europeans express themselves in all freedom, E.o.E. is virtually art in action and movement. Eyes of Europe is to open education what art is to freedom of expression.



*Governments have the duty to provide a space for self-criticism **where the people can question them.** No government is infallible; no human being --even if elected-- has the right to talk for all the citizens. Governments, corporations (today they are like alternative governments), and religious institutions are not the only ones with a right to build a future; this is the right of citizens, and artists are active citizens. That is why artists have the right and the responsibility not only to think up a different and better world, but to try to build it.*

*E.o.E. is willing to educate a new European folk by stimulating a young European opinion of emancipated young citizens through dialogue in real time on a variety of subjects with an emphasis on art in all its forms. **Art is a safe space from which people can debate, interpret, build, and educate.** This space must be defended because it benefits us all: art is a social tool.*

Creating a free and open space or democratic agora is basically what EoE is standing for, a space for open debate and permanent critical reflection in English.

Public space belongs to civic society, not to governments, corporations, or religious institutions.

Eyes of Europe is eager to liven up public space.

It is the duty of the government to protect and guarantee dissident, questioning voices, because these are moments in which one cannot do away with rationality and critical thought and it is sometimes only through art that many emerging ideas can make a public appearance.

Without dissent there is no chance of progress.

To create a space for dialogue and not for violence against works of art questioning established ideas and realities, governments should provide educational platforms from which artistic practice may be better understood.

That is literally pleading in favor of Eyes of Europe

A society with freedom of artistic expression is a healthier society that expresses itself better, in its entire complexity.

Complexity is basically induced and produced by a great many interactions. Interactive dialogue should appeal to all citizens including the young, especially the young as they are the future in waiting.

There is no other type of practice in the public sphere providing the qualities of the space created by art. Yes there is indeed: Eyes Of Europe.

Critical thinking is a civic right which becomes evident in artistic practices.

A few examples from recent artistic news will make that clear.

Jimmy Kimmel presenting the latest Oscars: *"I want to say thank you to President Trump ... last year it seemed like the #Oscars were racist."*; Iran's director of 'The Salesman' sends statement *slamming Trump's "inhumane" travel ban*. 'Suicide Squad' the Makeup & Hairstyling winners: *we dedicate our win to "all the immigrants."* Gael García Bernal: *"I'm against any form of wall that wants to separate us"* 'Zootopia' winners: *"Tolerance is more powerful than the fear of the establishment"*

Jimmy Kimmel was definitely creating a *space free criticism* when he skewered Donald Trump and the Academy's record on diversity in his opening monologue for the Oscars, thanking the president and saying: *"Remember last year when it seemed like the Oscars was racist?"*(...) *"There are millions and millions of people watching right now, and if every one of you took a minute to reach out to one person you disagree with and have a positive, considerate conversation – not as liberals or conservatives but as Americans – if we all did that it would make America great again. It starts with us."*

Kimmel also referenced the president's obsession with *"fake news"* and joked that it was nice to have a president who believes in the arts and sciences while introducing Cheryl Boone Isaacs, president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Kimmel also dedicated a section to Meryl Streep, calling her overrated and mimicking Donald Trump's criticism after the actor used a speech at the SAG awards in January to address the president.

*There are men who struggle for a day and they are good.
There are men who struggle for a year and they are better.
There are men who struggle many years, and they are better still.
But there are those who struggle all their lives:
These are the indispensable ones."* (Bertold Brecht)

And that is where Eyes of Europe is making the difference for they have been struggling passionately for the last twenty years.

"moonlight", the unexpected disturbing Oscar winning movie muses on reconciliation, forgiveness and authenticity.

This rewarded film boldly expresses a powerful affirmation for gay black men. *Moonlight offers them a chance to make peace with the sacrifices we made as youngsters, and heal. For younger audiences it may provide something even more profound – confirmation that you're not alone.* Josh Lee

For black queer audiences, Moonlight is the first time a mainstream film has spoken directly to them. *And for black gay kids who stumble across Moonlight that representation will answer questions that took some of us years to understand.* Josh Lee

This definitely reminds us of Brecht's *Epic Theatre* suggesting that a play should not cause the spectator to identify emotionally with the characters or action before him or her, but should instead provoke rational self-reflection and a **critical view** of the action on the stage.



His modernist concern with drama-as-a-medium is related to similar modernist innovations in other arts, including the strategy of divergent chapters in James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*, Sergei Eisenstein's evolution of a constructivist "montage" in the cinema, or Picasso's introduction of cubist "collage" in the visual arts.

Luis Sepúlveda is obviously walking in Brecht's footsteps when he maintains: "***I see literature as an expression of resistance***"

Luis Sepúlveda is a Chilean author born in 1949 who used to dream with Allende of a radical change in society, who experienced the jails under Pinochet and was released thanks to Amnesty International and who eventually migrated to Hamburg Germany.

His dream was about a utopic ambition *to change the Chilean society in a peaceful and democratic way*. (La Libre Belgique March 2017)

His utopia eventually ended in a violent right-wing military backlash. « *It was a utopia, for utopias are never implemented totally* ». *"It takes a great deal of intelligence to imagine a new world, to fancy a new society to change things radically.*

Inventing is resisting mediocrity but mediocrity is progressing across the world. I cannot imagine literature otherwise than as an act of resistance against all I regard as dirty and unfair. Reading makes intelligence more emotional.

"Hungry man, reach for the book: it is a weapon. (Bertolt Brecht)

STADTLUFT MACHT FREI, "city air makes you free," was once a statement of Germanic law: a serf who lived in a city for a year and a day was freed from his obligations to his manorial master. Today, Edward Glaeser feels the phrase has a deeper truth, reminding us of how cities enable social, political and economic liberty. Yet too often, public power represses, rather than enables, the free genius of urban creativity. The migrant who comes from rural India to Bangalore enters a world in which the strictures of rural life, such as the caste system, essentially vanish. In many poorer countries, rural life still binds with traditional rules enforced by elders who wield the threat of social ostracism. In a city, such threats become toothless because no elder can effectively banish those who misbehave. In our own day, we have witnessed urban uprisings topple authoritarian rules like Hosni Mubarak in Cairo. We saw the last military coup of the cold war stopped by the citizens of Moscow in 1991. The Arab Spring was called the "Twitter Revolution," but no uprising would have succeeded with tweets alone. Change was forced by masses of humanity who were connected and empowered by urban density.

City air can still make us free, but governments need to resist the urge to restrict urban innovation and that is where artists have a key role to play. Cities should definitely be laboratories for new opportunities, with fewer rules and more and more interactions in the public space. Freedom and city life are old friends. They must continue to travel together. Eyes of Europe is to be their privileged partner for better and for worse.

"All art forms are in the service of the greatest of all arts: the art of Living ". (Bertold Brecht)

MARC GUIOT

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