



SEEING ART IN LIFE

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Life imitates art. We tend to live our lives based on what we perceive to be pleasing, pleasant and commendable. We have an inclination to live our lives based on rules, principles and accepted concepts of living. Anything that goes beyond norms of living are always considered aberrant, depraved or reprehensible. Who seriously wants to view life in such a manner?

Art imitates life. It's a funny thing that the transposition between the subject and the object in the first statement will seldom create a completely believable fact, if ever. Sometimes, art depicts life in a more exaggerated way than possible. We've had movies inspired by true events, art work depicting real life situations. We have had cartoons providing a rich source of satire. They are only funny in their sheer honesty and depiction of truth.

Perhaps the Connecticut gunman who shot down 20 school children and 6 school staff at Sandy Hook School had a twisted view of life as an art. With the school kids who fell in the tragedy with ages ranging from 5 to 10, no parent, American or otherwise, can ever remain unaffected by the overwhelming grief that the parents of those innocent children must feel today. It's difficult to comprehend how such a crime can ever be planned, much less perpetuated by a sane individual. If anyone could ever describe such a horrific tragedy in art, he'd probably end up with an incomprehensible collection of splashes of blood-red colors in a background of black. It simply is not possible to describe the tragedy in a comprehensible art piece. That would require lots of willpower and determination to complete.

Then there was the very recent Oregon mall shooting and the Columbine High School shooting way, way back. The United States has not been the only country with such tragic events unfolding. We've also heard of school shootings in Asia, Europe, Australia and South America. Reading and hearing of such tragedies, one can not help but wonder why the act of killing always proves so horrific in learning institutions. Is it simply because of the fact that schools have the highest population of people with undiscovered potentials and so much promise? Or is it because schools are supposed to be a haven of safety for our children that we can't really imagine such grim scenarios to happen within those walls? I honestly believe that it's both.

We live our lives enclosed in our safety nets, assuring ourselves that nothing can ever go seriously wrong to mar our preset concepts of artful living. We can not continue misleading ourselves into believing that living will always be idyllic, tranquil and peaceful like a meadow scene or a calm blue sea in a painting. We need to be prepared for the eventualities of a dark, grim image before our eyes, and pray for greater strength to overcome such representations with faith in ourselves and each other.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. If you could describe your life through artwork, what colors would you choose? Why?
2. How does life imitate art, in your opinion?
3. How does art imitate life?
4. Talk about your favorite artist and his/her works. What sets this artist apart from others?
5. Do you like going to art galleries and museums? Why or why not?