

What's New?

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9/24/91

Dear Dr.

I only got to talk to you briefly at the museum opening last month. Part of our conversation sparked my desire to write you this letter with some of my ideas on art in your of-

There are already so many decisions to make in life, why should you complicate your already full schedule with such ephemeral thoughts as what art to hang? I'm willing to admit that for some pur-

public space. Your clients, coming into your public space, perceive the intent of the owner of that public space. The intent I propose is to make a statement in support of the use of art in everyday life.

and tattooed rockers that parents don't understand get plastered to doors. At what point in youth does a person acquire the option of art in their environment? What impact are these images we provide for the youth having on them?

Dear Dr.

John

NICHOLS



That selective choice of the art can take a number of branches. Some would make reference through their art selection to their profession. Some to their own special interests. Some to a particular medium. There are any number of arbitrary distinctions. The point is to decide. This is one of the many decisions that we will make that will shape how we are seen by others, or, more importantly, how we are seen by ourselves.

We do our youth a great disservice by not surrounding them with more art than they can stand. Roll all the things that art has ever done to you and for into a tight ball and now tell the youth that their time must be spent with constant references to the media. TV, movies and rock. In my day, it was sex, drugs and rock and roll. I guess I survived it but wouldn't it be ever so much better if the youth got a helping hand to open their eyes to the world that art helps us see?

fice. Please consider the source and see it for the self-serving pap that it is.

The waiting room and the other rooms in a doctor's office, or any office or public place for that matter, are at once public and very private. The public aspect of the space has to be dealt with at once by anyone who makes the decisions on what kind of art will hang there.

The art can do a number of things. It can soothe. A person can sit down and read a magazine and not be too distracted by the art on the walls. The art can blend in with the rest of the decor and the conventional wisdom states that the paintings or prints should probably match the fabric on the sofa. In the art business, we refer to this as O.T.C. That's "over-the-couch" art.

This may startle you but I think you should know that art can be whatever you decide it to be. Hire a decorator and you will probably get decorative art. Go to one of the chain frame shops and you will probably get some nice framed pieces that scream the decade they were purchased in. Somebody has to decide. Not to decide is to decide.

poses the best choice would be to go with art as decor and just buy nice prints off the rack.

There may be in your life a desire for art greater than decor. That desire may lead you to want the surroundings you call your life to reflect more of a human element. Maybe a little of your own humanity. There may be a desire to make a subtle statement on the nature of your humanity by the selective choice of what art experience is presented to the people visiting your public space.

No matter what you do, you are collecting. Is that accumulation of bad reproductions you hang on your walls really your collection? It is. What makes the most sense to me and what also seems to be the most fun is what I call the "Artistic Theory of Collecting." I just named that theory to hang some words on. My theory is to collect art by artists from your community. What is your community? I don't know. You tell me.

The artists make an artistic statement in whatever medium they choose. The collector says yes or no. The result of a yes is that a work of art now gets to be hung in your

The decision of what art to buy is a life and death decision to me. A large part of my own life is art. Without it, I would die.

I think that businesses in Ventura County should support the arts in Ventura County. I think that all citizens should. I don't like to use should too often, it is so self-defeating. In this case it works for me. I would like to see the offices and homes all over Ventura County filled with the work of Ventura County artists.

The public spaces in our County could be used to promote the arts of our County. This can be done by the purchase of art by local artists. It could take a little digging but it is there. There are fine veins that have yet to be tapped. I know that showing up for the museum openings is a good thing and that driving to L.A. or Santa Barbara to see exhibits is a good thing but what good is it if you come home to nothing but prints by dead European artists on your walls? Am I being too harsh? Take a look around you and decide.

It's like art in children's rooms. Most of what I have seen is all pink lambs and blue superheroes. As the children grow older, they may graduate to posters. Huge TV stars

I'm for equal access to the arts. Access to the arts for persons of any age, race, religion, sexual persuasion, custom or creed. Maybe that's what makes art so radical. If it can include all those groups then it must be truly democratic. Maybe that's why some groups want to control our art. It's too democratic.

What's the connection between children's rooms and waiting rooms? I think sometimes we treat our public like children. No Visual Input Allowed. Unless it will numb us or at the very least make us understand the messages on TV better.

So tell me, Doctor, why aren't you buying some art for your office? Are you worried about offending someone? The only thing offensive is bad art. Conspicuous consumption? You've got lots of bread, you're supposed to be spreading it around.

If you like art and have art in your personal life then it might be suggested that other people just might like to have a little art in their lives, too.

Like when we have to sit in your waiting room and read those "National Geographic" and "People" magazines that are over a year old.