

Purpose & Function of Art summarized by Mr Hoyes (TOK)

1. Physical functions of art:

Art works that are created to perform some service have physical functions.

- Mostly three-dimensional art forms that service human needs: 1. Food & water = vessels for preparation, storage and architecture, urban design; 2. Living & work = furniture; 3. Transportation = trains, airplanes, cars, ski, bicycles

2. Social functions of art:

Art works that address aspects of (collective) life, as opposed to one person's point of view.

- **Political & propaganda art.** (Government art prior to WW2 in US, Russia, UK;)
- Art that depicts **social conditions.** (Realists of early in the 19th century, Social Realism in Soviet Union. 20th century | century)
- Art can be created as **religious** service, education and appreciation of supernatural powers. (Art of the Middle ages)
- **Satire** performs social functions. (Francisco Goya and William Hogarth)

3. Personal functions of art:

Art works that address and express an artist's personal point of view and feelings.

- An artist may create out of a need for **self-expression**, or **gratification**. S/he might have wanted to **communicate** a message.
- Art work that provides an **aesthetic experience**, both for self and viewers. A piece might have been meant to "merely" have **any deeper/reflective meaning at all.**
- Some communities create art to bring **appreciation, order and control** into people's lives through mystical celebrations and decoration on instruments and artifacts made by indigenous people).
- Art can also be **therapeutic** - for both the artist and the viewer.
- Art can be created as **religious** service, education and appreciation of supernatural powers. (Art of the Middle ages)
- Art can be created to assist us in maintaining ourselves as a species. **Biological** functions would obviously include fertility and admiration of the human body in order to be attractive and strong enough for reproduction. (Indigenous art)

You, the viewer, are half of the equation in assigning function to art - as mentioned earlier. These **personal functions** are a