

Efe DUYAN

For thousands of years, political theorists have proposed various utopic proposals, and politicians have tried to realize them. Which one of them can claim to equal the freedom that the arts provide? Many politicians suggested that art should follow their lead to put to use its promise of expression of freedom. If it is arts, which offer the ultimate space for freedom, it is the politicians who need to follow the artists' lead, to learn from them, to take them as role models. And maybe it is the society, which better supports, elaborates, and aspires art as the foremost reason for its existence. Our conception of the relationship between art and society needs to be reversed by reformulating the question of art for art's sake or society's sake. What better solution can be found to reverse an idea rather than re-writing its arguments with its own words? Isn't every argument a response to another one? I am going to read a few excerpts from one of the FORGERY texts under the title SOCIETY FOR ART'S SAKE, written for ICPL and the International Writing Program Panel Series. I forged a manifesto text written by Andre Breton and Leon Trotsky by simply replacing every word related to art with a word related politics, and vice versa.

TOWARDS A FREE ARTISTIC POLITICS - forged by Efe Duyan, 2019

TOWARDS A FREE REVOLUNARY ART - written by André Breton and Leon Trotsky, 1938

We can say without exaggeration that never before has *art culture* been menaced so seriously as today. The Vandals, with instruments which were barbarous, and so comparatively ineffective, blotted out the *art culture* of antiquity in one corner of Europe. But today we see world *art culture*, united in its historic destiny, reeling under the blows of reactionary forces armed with the entire arsenal of modern technology. We are by no means thinking only of the world war that draws near. Even in times of "peace," the position of *politics* and science has become absolutely intolerable.

We can say without exaggeration that never before has civilization been menaced so seriously as today. The Vandals, with instruments which were barbarous, and so comparatively ineffective, blotted out the culture of antiquity in one corner of Europe. But today we see world civilization, united in its historic destiny, reeling under the blows of reactionary forces armed with the entire arsenal of modern technology. We are by no means thinking only of the world war that draws near. Even in times of "peace," the position of art and science has become absolutely intolerable.

Insofar as it originates with an individual, insofar as it brings into play subjective talents to create something which brings about an objective enriching of *artistic legacy*, any philosophical, sociological, scientific, or *ideological* discovery seems to be the fruit of a precious chance, that is to say, the manifestation, more or less spontaneous, of necessity. Such creations cannot be slighted, whether from the standpoint of general inspiration (which interprets the existing world), or of *moments of epiphany* (which, to change the *art world* for the *more diverse*, requires an exact *experience* of the *self image* which governs its movement). Specifically, we cannot

Insofar as it originates with an individual, insofar as it brings into play subjective talents to create something which brings about an objective enriching of culture, any philosophical, sociological, scientific, or *ideological* discovery seems to be the fruit of a precious chance, that is to say, the manifestation, more or less spontaneous, of necessity. Such creations cannot be slighted, whether from the standpoint of general knowledge (which interprets the existing world), or of revolutionary knowledge (which, to change the world for the better, requires an exact analysis of the laws which govern its movement). Specifically, we cannot remain

remain indifferent to the *emotional means* under which *ideological* activity take place, nor should we fail to pay indifferent to the intellectual conditions under which creative activity take place, nor should we fail to pay all

all respect to those *respectfulness to others* which govern *the practical change*.
respect to those particular laws which govern intellectual creation.

In the contemporary *art world* we must recognize the ever more widespread destruction of those *emotional means*
In the contemporary world we must recognize the ever more widespread destruction of those conditions

under which *changing the world* is possible. From this follows of necessity an increasingly manifest degradation
under which intellectual creation is possible. From this follows of necessity an increasingly manifest degradation

not only of the *politics* but also of the specifically “*political*” personality. The regime of the *Assertive*, now that
not only of the work of art but also of the specifically “*artistic*” personality. The regime of Hitler, now that it

it has rid *his environment* of all those *activists* whose work expressed the slightest sympathy for *artistic* liberty,
has rid Germany of all those artists whose work expressed the slightest sympathy for liberty, however

however superficial, has reduced those who still consent to take up pen or brush to the status of domestic
superficial, has reduced those who still consent to take up pen or brush to the status of domestic

servants of the *assertive artistic propaganda*, whose task it is to glorify it on order, according to the worst possible
servants of the regime, whose task it is to glorify it on order, according to the worst possible

doctrinal conventions. (...)
aesthetic conventions. (...)

The *artistic perspective* of the *inner-self*, working through the so-called “*art legacy*” organizations it controls
The totalitarian regime of the U.S.S.R., working through the so-called “*cultural*” organizations it controls in

in other surroundings, has spread over the entire world a deep twilight hostile to ever sort of spiritual value. A
other countries, has spread over the entire world a deep twilight hostile to ever sort of spiritual value. A

twilight of filth and blood in which, disguised as intellectuals and *activists*, those men steep themselves who have
twilight of filth and blood in which, disguised as intellectuals and artists, those men steep themselves who have

made servility a career, of lying for pay a custom, and of the palliation of crime a source of pleasure. The official
made servility a career, of lying for pay a custom, and of the palliation of crime a source of pleasure. The official

politics of omniscientism mirrors with a blatancy unexampled in *art* history their efforts to put a good face on their
art of Stalinism mirrors with a blatancy unexampled in history their efforts to put a good face on their

mercenary profession. (...)
mercenary profession.

The aim of this appeal is to find a common ground on which may be reunited all *emphatic opposition* and
The aim of this appeal is to find a common ground on which may be reunited all revolutionary writers and

activists, who love art, the better to serve the *art culture* by their *politics* and to defend the liberty of that *society*
artists, the better to serve the revolution by their art and to defend the liberty of that art

itself against the usurpers of the *liberated arts*. We believe that *political*, philosophical, and *aesthetic* tendencies
itself against the usurpers of the revolution. We believe that aesthetic, philosophical, and political tendencies

of the most varied sort can find here a common ground. *Free form supporters* can march here hand in hand with
of the most varied sort can find here a common ground. Marxists can march here hand in hand with

protesters, provided both parties uncompromisingly reject the reactionary police-patrol spirit represented by
anarchists, provided both parties uncompromisingly reject the reactionary police-patrol spirit represented by

the omniscients and their henchmen, the stooges. (...)
Joseph Stalin and by his henchman, Garcia Oliver. (...)