

DECLARATION ON ART AND THE HUMAN PERSON

We are artists of the World Youth Alliance representing a variety of artistic disciplines and cultural backgrounds. We believe that art provides a window into the complexity, integrity, and beauty of human nature and the natural world. Art speaks to the emotions, and can reflect the individual's deepest desire to strive towards the transcendent.

Art is an expression of the dignity of the human person and has an objective value and purpose. Acknowledging and challenging all dimensions of the human person—physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual—the creative act itself is a testament to the depth and richness of human nature.

Art springs from the individual's desire to express himself and his perception of the world. The human person is the agent of art; his or her aspirations, joys and agonies, are reflected in the created work. Discipline refines artistic perception and technique, lending substance to artistic creation.

Artists create not only for the sheer joy of the creative act, but also to meet the challenge it inevitably entails—to communicate and articulate an aspect of reality that is best heard, shown, or experienced. In this way, the artist gives form to the intangible dimensions of humanity. In viewing art, one is given the privilege to peer into the artist's soul; invited, as it were, to receive the artist's gift of himself, through his work. In this way, art is an act of love that provides a voice for what would otherwise remain hidden.

The artist invites others into the intimacy of his creation; whether to exalt, weep, anguish or enjoy what he has made. But great artists do more than reflect the culture and times in which they live; they show us not only where we are, but where we are going. Their imagination of the way things should be captures our own so firmly that it shapes the direction and reality of culture and civilization. This transformative power of art places a social responsibility on the artist.

Art enables us to move beyond ourselves, and to shape, through our imagination, the world in which we live. We affirm the transformative power of art in society and culture, and its capacity to reveal man's desire for the transcendent. We encourage artists to participate in the noble work of elevating the human spirit, which we believe is the great task of art in the modern world. In this way, artists have a crucial role in understanding human life, and building societies and cultures that affirm the dignity of every human person.