

The Arts and Culture: A Christian Aesthetic

Final Project 2013

DUE March 1, 2013

LENGTH: 12-15 pages

REFERENCES: 5-8 outside resources. Books, articles, journals, blogs. (Don't build your paper on Wikipedia.)

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For your final project, you will choose a **PARTICULAR PERSONAL ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE** as your subject. This needs to be a personal encounter with an artistic work that you experience as the creator of the work intended it to be experienced. (Film, novel, play, music, dance, etc.)

Please send your idea for your paper to Ashley Gay or myself to approve. We approve 99% of the choices, but if your choice is too "thin", you may have a hard time doing the appropriate level of research/reflection.

The structure of your paper will be built around the following:

- Your personal, experiential **ENGAGEMENT** with the artistic work and artist
 - Describe the sensory/emotional/imaginative/intellectual experience. Include the details, sensory and otherwise, of the experience. Where were you? What was the venue? What were your initial reactions? What were your feelings as you moved through the piece? How were you impacted on a visceral level? What were your initial, non-intellectual takeaways? Or were you primarily challenged intellectually? If so, talk about that. Help us experience the piece as you did.
- An **ANALYSIS** of the artistic work
 - Here is the bulk of your research. You want to engage and understand the intellectual/emotions/spiritual ideas and questions at work in this particular work of art. The artist's biography, his/her Intention with this work, his/her other artistic works, as well as the critical response to the work may all be helpful in your understanding. Interviews, popular articles, scholarly articles, and other writings will be key to finding what you need here.
 - Also, raise the aesthetic questions. Why was this particular form used? What is the significance of these aesthetic choices? Be specific in terms of 2-3 aesthetic elements. Discuss the metaphors and symbols used. Again, interviews and professional reviews will be useful here.

- Discuss the cultural impact of the work. What was its commercial success? What kind of conversations did it generate in the broad culture? Who paid attention, and why?
- Your personal **REFLECTION** on the work, especially from theological point of view
 - What does the work mean? What theological lens is most helpful to look through? What did I learn about the world/culture around me?
 - What questions does the work elicit? What are my responses to those questions? Does the work call me to any new or specific action? If so, what? Does the work alter my thinking in any way? How so?
 - Again, the idea of cultural impact may come into play. Is the culture being called to examine itself, and what is/was the response?
- Your **EVALUATION** of the work
 - Was the work good? If so, how so? If not, why not? Keep in mind the artist's intention, their technical work, as well as the moral/theological implications of the work.
 - Was it worth my time and money? Why or why not?
 - What did you learn about your future choices of art experiences?
 - Am I more or less inclined to have "the mind of Christ" following this experience and reflection? Explain.
 - Would you recommend this experience? If so, to whom would you recommend it? If not, why not?
 - How am I changed by this work?