

Hi Michelle,

My friend, my art teacher's failure to appreciate the freedom and the creative license needed for pure artistic expression was traumatic at that youthful, delicate age. Teachers shape future artists and all other professions, and so have profound impact upon the shaping of our world.

Treated as if I were doing something wrong - in an act of innocence - I could not understand why a response serious enough to confront my parents about it; do you think that he saw himself as saving society by redeeming me from becoming a fledgling Jack the Ripper? or did he ruin an incipient Picasso? As an instructor one would think he could have creatively steered me away to what he thought was a more appropriate artistic expression or forms. Instead nothing was ever said directly to me. It seems that I recall a strange look on his face when he peered over my shoulder at my project, he saw not art but deviancy. . . I can imagine some quack psycho-doctor analyzing this as the art teacher must have, and as gung-ho prison psychologist are quick to do, to say that the said artistic forms reflected the incipient "anti-social and psychopathic behavior" at an early age that inclined me toward a downward spiral to incarceration. Socialpathic and psychopathic these days are catch-all, plastic, terms put upon virtually everyone who is outcast or held within state institutions to hold them there as long as possible. Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* so aptly stated: "By opening so freely their lunatic asylums to their supposed madmen, men only seek to assume each

other that they are not themselves mad." pp 2 of 2

I have an old Situationists International tract, "In and Against Decomposition," authored by Guy Debord in '57. The SI were revolutionaries and this particular piece addresses the need to undertake "the collective task" for "the creation of a new cultural theater of operations." It critiques the decomposition of modern and traditional arts and calls for revolutionary artists to "experiment with what lies beyond the present atomization of wannout traditional arts." It presupposes that artist [of all forms] are themselves architects of culture and society as well as shaping the state of the world. "The best-known art appearing in our time is controlled by those who know 'how far to go too far,' that it is timidity that prevents people from looking beyond the present structures, thus dooming them to wallow in the decomposition."

Art is given free creative activity in capitalism which in turn seeks to coopt it to further its own ends. This grant of perpetual privileged concession of pure creative activity is the very reason why in capitalist systems art is the most prestigious and precious status symbol.

The most innovative or revolutionary artist stand upon a pinnacle of cultural and social influence and cast, through artistic expression, infuse the system with more life-blood or deal it a mental blow.

Take Care,

Dated: 5/17/2011

Peace & Love,
La Ren McEiley Bey