

Art galleries waste of time for kids, says artist

7th August, 2014



One of Britain's more thought-provoking artists has said taking children to art galleries is, "a total waste of time". Jake Chapman made his controversial

comments in an interview with the Independent newspaper. He also made other comments that might anger parents, child development experts, and children. He accused parents of being "arrogant" for thinking children could understand modern art. He said to show a child a painting by the American artist Jackson Pollock is an "insult" to the artist. Pollock pioneered the style of art known as abstract expressionism. Chapman explained that it's like telling the artist his work is "as moronic as a child". He added: "Children are not human yet."

Chapman's comments have created a stir in the art world. Award-winning artist Anthony Gormley said: "I don't think art is to be understood. It's to be experienced...It is to be felt. Feeling comes before understanding." A spokesman from London's National Gallery said: "Children benefit a great deal from visiting art galleries and museums. It widens their horizons." BBC Arts Editor Will Gompertz suggested Chapman's comments were designed to manipulate the media to get more attention. He said: "The formula is simple: When you have an exhibition to promote, say something mildly inflammatory to the press, and watch the column inches...and ticket sales soar."

Sources: BBC / The Guardian / The Independent

Writing

Children are too young to be able to understand and appreciate art. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

thought-provoking / art galleries / waste of time / controversial / insult / abstract / created a stir / feeling / understanding / museums / attention / media / exhibition

True / False

- An American artist said art galleries wasted children's time. T / F
- The artist said children were able to understand modern art. T / F
- The artist said most art was insulting to children. T / F
- The artist said children weren't yet human. T / F
- Many people in the art world are talking about the artist's comments. T / F
- Anthony Gormley said art is felt before it is understood. T / F
- A BBC arts editor said the comments were made for publicity reasons. T / F
- The editor said a formula makes the press say inflammatory things. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. total | a. annoy |
| 2. controversial | b. control |
| 3. anger | c. stupid |
| 4. pioneered | d. fuss |
| 5. moronic | e. debatable |
| 6. stir | f. shoot up |
| 7. benefit | g. entire |
| 8. widens | h. profit |
| 9. manipulate | i. developed |
| 10. soar | j. broadens |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of Chapman's comments?
- Is art to be understood, experienced or felt?
- How do children and adults view art differently?
- How does art widen children's horizons?
- What do you like about visiting an art gallery?
- Would parents be right to be angry?
- What do you think of an artist making a controversial comment to get more publicity?
- What questions would you like to ask the artist Jake Chapman?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. One of Britain's more thought- | a. style of art |
| 2. controversial | b. their horizons |
| 3. He accused parents of being | c. as a child |
| 4. Pollock pioneered the | d. stir in the art world |
| 5. as moronic | e. inflammatory to the press |
| 6. Chapman's comments have created a | f. provoking artists |
| 7. It widens | g. the media |
| 8. designed to manipulate | h. ticket sales soar |
| 9. say something mildly | i. comments |
| 10. watch the column inches and | j. "arrogant" |

Discussion – Student B

- How important is art?
- How important is art in your life?
- Is taking kids to art galleries a waste of time?
- Are parents arrogant to think their kids understand art?
- What is abstract art? Is it good?
- Are there styles of art children should not see?
- Why might Chapman think showing a child modern art is an "insult" to the artist?
- Why do you think Chapman said children are not human yet?

Spelling

- more thought-voorpknig artists
- Chapman made his rvelosnictrao comments
- He accused parents of being gnrrotaa
- Pollock piedeenr the style
- art known as ctbtaars expressionism
- his work is as rmnioco as a child
- Children tbnifee a great deal
- It widens their hiorsnz
- designed to utnimlpeaa the media
- The mofural is simple
- say something mildly lyafniamtomr
- watch the lmunoc inches

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. a	4. i	5. c
6. d	7. h	8. j	9. b	10. f

Role Play

Role A – Manga

You think manga is the best form of art. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their art forms aren't so great. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): graffiti, installation art or religious art.

Role B – Graffiti

You think graffiti is the best form of art. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their art forms aren't so great. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): manga, installation art or religious art.

Role C – Installation art

You think installation art is the best form of art. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their art forms aren't so great. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): graffiti, manga or religious art.

Role D – Religious art

You think religious art is the best form of art. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their art forms aren't so great. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): graffiti, installation art or manga.

Speaking – Art

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| • manga | • graffiti |
| • installation art | • religious art |
| • abstract art | • ancient art |
| • calligraphy | • impressionism |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.