An Interpretive Response to “Protecting History, Resisting Legibility: Voice and Defiance in Making Art”

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Professor Fisher's article takes a different tack. Rather than working in the genre of 'conventional' historical scholarship, this essay provides literary criticism of current movements and models in 'the marketplace' of fine arts. Drawing on a tradition of Belles Lettres, Dr. Fisher aims to persuade us that all is not well in the world of fine arts, not to say popular culture. The central core of the paper is that we "must draw closer to the front of cultural tensions that makes experience-subjectivity-memory a strength and the core source of creativity". One's authenticity is key to the creative process that art requires, and popular culture and postmodern skepticism work to break this authenticity down, to the demise of the artist. Frequently polemical, and always rhetorical, Dr. Fisher's critical piece makes a nice complement to the other articles in this volume.

The Author Replies....

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Style does not separate from content at the behest of the critic. Neither – should Aristotle's principle be recalled – does rhetoric from logic. It was Bacon who opined that, while “histories make men wise,” it is “logic and rhetoric” that make them “able to contend.” In a world no longer moved to distinguish expression from push-button dialect, the comforts of rhetoric offer consolation. But, in the end, one “contend(s)” and one writes in the conviction that the alliance of rhetoric and logic has been respected.