

Some of this lecture is written for the purpose and some is from work already written or published. One problem with a lecture, mentioned by Gertrude Stein, is that the speaker tends to get bored and listen to the speaker, so I'm going to read some, change the slides and comment, read some more and comment. Perhaps you will ask questions later. Another problem is that the circumstances of art and architecture is such a broad topic that I can only consider fragments anyway. The nature of this lecture series is such that I could discuss what constitutes a good work of art, but this is a difficult philosophical matter. At the present there are quite a few good artists and a few architects who have some idea of this so that I don't think it's the primary public issue of art and architecture. Basically we know how to do these things well. The primary public issue is that the public won't let us use what we know. Hardly anyone of the public will acknowledge the autonomy and authority of the two fields. Their greatest danger is to be used and assimilated.

Until the last ten years, artists, not architects, were outsiders in relation to the American society. It was possible to make portable things and sell them at a distance. Now there is more interest in art, many institutions, and a desire on the part of artists to make large works and some possibility to do so. But the minute any sum of money or a need for organization is involved, the artist, and even more the architect, meets a committee full of all considerations except those of good art and architecture, and any possibility of excellence is cancelled. Therefore the conclusion is that the public knows very little about art and architecture, including not knowing that it knows little, and even worse ultimately does not respect the knowledge of the practitioners. And, as in politics, the less known the stronger the opinion. And in both cases the knowledgeable person is resented; that person disturbs the peace of thoughtlessness.

The artists and architects are obligated by the definition of themselves to protect the excellence and integrity of their

work. They cannot conform to a bottomless conformity. The United States is profoundly conformist. Europe is a garden of diverse delights, although unified some by industrialization. Even the industrial design varies. In the Soviet Union conformity has been applied; here it's been freely acquired. I'm not so sure ancient Egypt and China changed as slowly as the European historians described them, but if they did I've gained some understanding of this by living in the United States for so long. The country is not conservative but is merely conformist; change is superficial and stasis is fundamental.

The artists and architects have an authority in what they do, but this is not authority as power. In fact it's the public which is trying to exert actual power over them. Oscar Wilde said, "Art should never try to be popular; the public should try to make itself artistic." The public has to make an effort to learn and to stick to the reasons for the two activities. Almost all interest at the moment is in the use of the two fields so that every action is indirect, everything is about something else, even admiration.

It is late to say so but it still isn't sufficiently acknowledged that all societies are changing from agricultural to industrial ones, with much greater populations. This is what all the uproar is about. This causes the poor education, the complex and ambiguous industrial systems and wars. It's still a new era and art and architecture have to deal with it. They can't look backward, especially ignorantly backward. Bertrand Russell said in 1923, "We concluded, as some writers in Germany and Czechoslovakia have also concluded, that the important fact of the present time is not the struggle between capitalism and socialism, but the struggle between industrial civilization and humanity."

A young artist said to me the other day, having spent the year in Rome, that there was little contemporary art there, which I knew, and that everyone was satisfied with the past. She said though, "even Michelangelo was young once."

She interpreted her and our brief lives as a reason for doing something new now and not as a reason for subsidence into eternity. She said this is our time, which seems obvious. This is the only time which is going to be our time. These are obvious points lost on everyone.

Art is relatively new in the United States but it is already being abused and threatened. Until recently it has mainly been done by those who consider themselves outsiders to the society. These outsiders are being drawn in now. This is the big change and the big problem of the last ten years. Good art may not survive even a limited incorporation.

These are some of the problems of contemporary art and architecture. In addition, oppressing these activities and every person, undercutting every purpose and hope is the forty-year threat of nuclear war. I grew to the age of cannon fodder during World War II, just barely missing it and the Korean War, and, like everyone else, have lived in the Cold War ever since. This war is ignorant and fanatical and irrelevant to the real interests of the United States. Recently there was an article in *The New York Times* by Thomas L. Friedman reasonably condemning the fanatic terrorists in Beirut. I want to add that endangering a billion people for forty years on such specious arguments as those for nuclear bombs is caused by a greater form of fanaticism. It's also bound to create a context of violence for the lesser form. Both Reagan and Mondale said that the bombs make them feel secure. But not me, either for myself, my work, or my children.

The Russians are expansionists; the Americans are expansionists. During a polite and free argument with a guide in Leningrad I was trying to criticize the United States, while not absolving the Soviet Union, as she was inclined to do, although not completely. I later figured out that the best way to state the case is to say that what each nation says about the other is true. They have great faults but neither country really wants war. The Americans can't imagine it and the Russians

know it too well and too recently. But a great preparation for war has usually produced war.

F.D. Roosevelt said in 1940:

And while I am talking to you mothers and fathers, I give you one more assurance. I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars. They are going into training to form a force so strong that, by its very existence, it will keep the threat of war away from our shores. The purpose of our own defense is defense.

Both countries became the empires they fought in World War II. To maintain this dying idea they are ruining their economy and impoverishing their people. This false economy of empire and war is the second threat to everyone in this country and in the Soviet Union.