

# *An Artist Writes . . .*

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## **On Today's Art Critic**

Plastic art is an accepted expression of man's most valid aspirations. It is only the mediocre artist who would attempt to transpose into form and colour what could better be said with words.

As the medium that the art critic uses is this medium of words, it seems at first that his calling is in vain. It seems all the more so in our days where a whole vocabulary is attempted to infringe on what is strictly the plastic arts.

It was perhaps a less futile activity in the 19th century when the critic, realizing that he was first a literary man, did not attempt a re-duplication of the work of art, preferring to go into rapture about it as a kind of lyrical exercise that used the art work only as its starting point.

As the play proceeds, the spectator should be seated facing the stage instead of crowding the wings. Most critics of today refuse to take a spectator's seat facing the work of art and yielding to the illusion. They prefer to watch the artist at his work and analyze, cog by cog, the piece of machinery that a functional work of art should be. This either irritates the poor artist at his work or makes him exceedingly proud.

In both cases, it may invalidate the final result.

If critics of today would keep their seats with a spectator's right to hiss or applaud, but respecting the privacy of the artist at work, they would be better critics and the artist himself a less harassed worker.

—JEAN CHARLOT