



SCHILLER'S UNFULFILLABLE PROMISE: JUSTIFYING ART EDUCATION ON MORAL GROUNDS

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Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805)



Friedrich Schiller,
*On the Aesthetic
Education of Man
in a Series of
Letters* (1795)



On the Aesthetic
Education of Man in
a Series of Letters

Schiller, Friedrich

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

“Art is a daughter of Freedom, and takes her orders from the necessity inherent in minds, not from the exigencies of matter” (OAE, 2, p.7).

“[...] it is only through Beauty that man makes his way to Freedom”. (OAE, 2. P. 9).

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

“[...] from the sheer potentialities of our sensuo-rational nature [...] a] pure rational concept of Beauty [...] so that beauty could] be shown to be a necessary condition of Human Being” (OAE, 10, p. 69)

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

“Man can be at odds with himself in two ways: either as savage [*Wilder*], when feeling predominates over principle; or as barbarian [*Barbar*], when principle destroys feeling” (OAE, 4, p. 21).

“The man of Culture makes a friend of Nature, and honours her freedom whilst curbing only her caprice” (OAE, 4, p. 21).

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

The sensuous drive, which corresponds with “Condition” “proceeds from the physical existence of man [...] Its business is to set him within the limits of time, and to turn him into matter” (OAE, 12, p. 79).

The formal drive, which corresponds with “Person” “proceeds from the absolute existence of man, or from his rational nature, and is intent on giving him the freedom to bring harmony into the diversity of his manifestations, and to affirm his Person among all his changes of Condition” (OAE, 12, p. 81).

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

“The sense-drive wants to be determined, wants to receive its object; the form-drive wants itself to determine, wants to bring forth its object. The play-drive, therefore, will endeavour so to receive as if it had itself brought forth, and so to bring forth as the intuitive sense aspires to receive.” (OAE, 14, p. 97).

“[...] exert upon the psyche at once a moral and a physical constraint” (OAE, 14, p. 97).

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“for detail and subordinate occupations [... while the latter] combine this capacity with a sense of reality, destined for wholeness and for great roles” (OAE, 21, p. 147).

“Such readers will enjoy a serious and moving poem as though it were a sermon, a naïve or humorous one as though it were an intoxicating drink” (OAE, 22, p. 159).

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

“the transition from a passive state of feeling to an active state of thinking and willing cannot, then, take place except *via* a middle state of aesthetic freedom [... and so] only out of the aesthetic, not out of the physical, state that the moral can develop” (OAE, 23, pp. 161-3).

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

“Only inasmuch as it is honest (expressly renounces all claims to reality), and only inasmuch as it is autonomous (dispenses with all support from reality), is semblance aesthetic. From the moment it is dishonest, and simulates reality, or from the moment it is impure, and has need of reality to make its effect, it is nothing but a base instrument for material ends, and affords no evidence whatsoever of any freedom of the spirit” (OAE, 26, p. 197)

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

“in actuality no purely aesthetic effect is ever to be met with (for man can never escape his dependence upon conditioning forces)” (OAE, 22, p. 153)

“to that ideal of aesthetic purity” (OAE, 22, p. 153).

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795)

“As long as man is still a savage he enjoys by means of these tactile senses alone, and at this stage the senses of semblance are merely the servants of these. Either he does not rise to the level of seeing at all, or he is at all events not satisfied with it. Once he does begin to enjoy through the eye, and seeing acquires for him a value of its own, he is already aesthetically free and the play-drive has started to develop” (26, p. 195).

Thank you 😊

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