

International Society for Education through Art  
Société Internationale pour l'Education à travers l'Art  
نفلا فيرط نع ميلعتال فيلودلا فيعمج  
國際藝術教育學會  
Международное Общество Образования через Искусство  
Sociedad Internacional de Educación por el Arte  
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November 25, 2014

We are members of InSEA (The International Society for Education through Art), an organization that advocates for art education as a means of “fostering values and disciplines essential for full intellectual, emotional and social development of human beings”<sup>1</sup> in all nations throughout the world. As such, we look to the more powerful nations of the world for leadership in matters of educational policy.

Our organization had its genesis in the philosophies of Sir. Herbert Read and other internationally respected philosophers, scholars, and art educators, who, in reflecting upon the horrors of WWII, recognized the importance of nurturing youth to become empathetic human beings. While advances in fields of science and technology may hold practical benefits, they also may unbridle self-centered desires to overpower and subjugate. The founders of InSEA understood that through the arts youth might come to experience appreciation of cultural differences, be guided to think critically and analytically about problematic situations and – in perceiving these issues through the viewpoints of others - identify harmonious solutions to complex intellectual, social, cultural, environmental and geo-political problems.

We recognize the important roles of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in society. Indeed, many of the intellectual characteristics of successful scientists, engineers, and mathematicians are similar to those of artists. Furthermore, we applaud that young women be encouraged to consider careers in fields, wherein they once may not have been welcomed. Yet we are deeply concerned at your implication that youth disregard interests in the arts and humanities in pursuit of careers that narrowly focus on STEM. As others have pointed out - data simply does

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.insea.org/insea/about>

not bear out your arguments that there is no future and are no jobs in the arts and humanities. Indeed, in a 2011 report it was announced that:

The UK has the largest creative sector of the European Union. In terms of GDP it is the largest in the world, and according to UNESCO it is, in absolute terms, the most successful exporter of cultural goods and services in the world, ahead of even the US.<sup>2</sup>

This does not suggest a bleak future awaits those who pursue the arts and humanities, even as the numbers of youth enrollment in these educational programs increases, if for no other reason than this: If the UK were to produce more mathematicians and scientists and these workers were to secure the well paying jobs you describe, would they not wish to enjoy the bounties of their wealth in beautiful homes, furnished with the finest of crafted objects, or spend evenings and weekends engaging with the arts? Would not an increase of those pursuing STEM careers *assure* an equally great need for artists, architects, and craftsmen?

Yet, our concerns are not with the financial benefits of one field or career versus another. History reminds us that when nations pursue blind innovative, without the balancing effects of all that the arts and humanities provide, they jeopardize the happiness of their citizens and a peaceful co-existence with other nations of the world. The arts remind us of our humanity by keeping us hopeful, easing our sense of loneliness, and focusing our attentions on things that really *matter*, such as ethical interactions with one another and the natural world. To be productive, happy citizens of nations and the world, we need youth who are capable of advancing society towards peaceful harmonious goals. We need citizens of nations and the world who are emotionally stable, have balanced interests in the practical and aesthetic, and are free to pursue career paths that are deeply satisfying – whatever those career choices might be, - and who, as a result, find welcoming opportunities in those chosen fields.

We urge you to serve as a global leader in clarifying such an educational policy of balance.

Sincerely yours,

Teresa Eca, InSEA President, Portugal

Rita Irwin, InSEA Past- President, Canada

Marjorie Manifold, InSEA Vice-President, USA

Glen Coutts, InSEA Vice-President, Scotland

Vedat Oszoy ; InSEA Secretary, Turkey

James Sanders, InSEA treasurer, USA

Janeke Wienk, European Representative in the InSEA World Council, Netherlands

Martina Paatela- Nieminen , European Representative in the InSEA World Council, Finland

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<sup>2</sup> [http://creativecities.britishcouncil.org/creative-industries/what\\_are\\_creative\\_industries\\_and\\_creative\\_economy](http://creativecities.britishcouncil.org/creative-industries/what_are_creative_industries_and_creative_economy)