

1981

## Reagan Administration: Funding Cuts News Articles (1981-1982): Response or Comment 03

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reintegration into the social community.

To eliminate this extremely modest Washington

VICTOR J. FISCHER

MARCH 20 1987 POST

### America's Arts Aren't 'Mediocre'

In response to Lewis H. Lapham's "Why Patronize America's Mediocre Arts?" [op-ed, March 20], in which he states that "Americans have a talent for brilliant interpretation and performance, but they haven't got the knack for making works of art."

I disagree. For example: Mark Twain, Georgia O'Keeffe, T. S. Eliot, Nathaniel Hawthorne, James M. Whistler, Thomas Pynchon, Aaron Copeland, Herman Melville, Isadora Duncan, Edward Hopper, Charles Ives, William Gaddis, Albert Pinkham Ryder, Tennessee Williams, George Gershwin, Marjorie Graham, William Faulkner, Frank Lloyd Wright and Walt Whitman . . . just to name a few.

WILLIAM PEAK

Alexandria

With one sweep of his poison pen, Mr. Lapham not only denies us our cultural heritage, but undermines our future as well, for only in a nation that recognizes, values and supports the arts—with public as well as private dollars—will they flourish.

When the current administration proposes massive cuts in an already

inadequate arts budget, that's no sigh of relief Mr. Lapham hears: it's a moan of anguish.

ALICE J. KLING

Washington

I could hardly believe my eyes as I read Mr. Lapham's column on American mediocrity in the arts. May I just point out to him that:

1) Our country is barely 200 years old, and has made more progress in artistic innovation than any other country of the same period.

2) Art is never considered great until future generations have passed judgment.

3) There would have been precious little great art produced in Europe had it not been for the financial and political support of patrons over the centuries.

4) American industrial barons have made vast contributions to support our arts. Does Mr. Lapham advocate that they should assume complete responsibility for American artistic endeavor or that they should save their money and invest elsewhere?

IRMA SPENCER

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