

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989)

Education: National Endowment for the Arts
and Humanities, Subject Files II (1962-1996)

March 2017

Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989): Correspondence 21

Laramee

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_II_60

Recommended Citation

Laramee, "Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989): Correspondence 21" (2017). *Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989)*. Paper 27.

https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_II_60/27

This Correspondence is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989) by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.

Tax dollars support anti-Christian PISS CHRIST Work of Art

The "work of art" is a very large, vivid photograph of Christ hanging on a cross submerged in urine. The "work of art" was done by Andrea Serrano. Mr. Serrano was rewarded for his anti-Christian bigotry by The Rockefeller Foundation and The Equitable Foundation with a \$15,000 prize. To encourage acquisition of the works displayed in the exhibition, museums participating were given grants of \$10,000. A work (or works) by one or more of the award recipients is purchased with these funds.

The "work of art" was displayed at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art May 26-July 17, the Carnegie-Mellon University Art Gallery in Pittsburgh September 11-October 9, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond December 13-January 29, 1989. As best AFA can determine, the "work of art" is currently on display at the Stux Gallery in New York.

The exhibition was part of *The Awards in the Visual Arts* program funded by The Rockefeller Foundation, The Equitable Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal government agency in Washington, D.C., supported by tax dollars. The fact that a government agency would spend tax dollars to help promote this piece of anti-Christian bigotry is deplorable. The work was titled "Piss Christ". When asked, since he had worked with urine, what could be expected next, Mr. Serrano responded, "Semen."

AFA was informed by The Equitable Foundation that they are a section of The Equitable Life Assurance Society of The United States. The address is Chrm. Richard H. Jenrette, Equitable Life Insurance, 787 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019, phone 212-554-1234.

The address for the Rockefeller Foundation is Pres. Richard W. Lyman, The Rockefeller Foundation, 1133 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036, phone 212-869-8500.

The person at the National Endowment for the Arts responsible for approving federal tax dollars for the promotion of the Piss Christ "work of art" should be fired.

Dear Senator,

The National Endowment for the Arts' decision to use my tax dollars to help promote Andrea Serrano's work (entitled "Piss Christ") as part of "The Awards in the Visual Arts" program is extremely upsetting.

I demand that the person responsible for this be fired; and that my hard-earned tax dollars never be given to any "artist" whose work is motivated by hatred and/or bigotry.

Please advise me what action you plan to take in this situation. I await your response.

Sincerely, Lorraine Family
Address: 270 Tift Street
City and Zip Lawtucket, R. I. 02860