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Defense of art council’s Dan Lecht

I read with interest Channing Gray’s review of Dan Lecht, president of the Council on the Arts of Rhode Island. While the writer’s opinions portrayed Mr. Lecht as a political figure placed in an artistic arena, the true picture shines through the biased reporting.

It is a clear-cut reflection of a lack of imagination that confines people to tracks such as either business or art, and suspects people who try to close the gap. The fact that Dan is a dynamic, hard-working, imaginative success in business does not militate against his understanding and appreciation of art, but actually augments and utilizes it, projecting dynamism into another idiom.

If, as the reporter contends, Mr. Lecht is able to create a tropical jungle in the northern city of Warwick, then his deep appreciation of the world outside business and politics can serve only to enhance the standard of art appreciation for all Rhode Islanders. To define his dedication to the enlargement of the artistic spheres of this state as actions politically based is a sad misnomer and a distortion of facts.

Mr. Gray’s observation of politics being played through the Council on the Arts reflects other agendas rather than objective reporting. I have been turned down for a position on the council, but I do not construe this loss as political — only that I lacked the necessary qualifications.

I think it is unfair to accuse Mr. Lecht of using art for politics. I support Dan in his thrust to aid and further the best art for the money available.

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