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Hilda C. Nicolosi

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The Honorable Claiborne Pell
325 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Pell:

The enclosed article is sent to you for your attention. I am making the presumption that the National Endowment for the Arts is a tax-funded organization.

If so, it is appalling to me that our tax dollars are being used for this kind of warped demonstration coming under the heading of "art"! It is a gross insult to the Catholic people of this country.

Are we now picking every reprobate up off the street, handing him a federal grant, and encouraging him to "do your thing"??

Thank you for your consideration of the enclosed material.

Sincerely,

Hilda C. Nicolosi

Hilda C. Nicolosi (Mrs.)

Enclosure
Catholics Protest

Anti-Religious Art Exhibit

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Like the great winter blizzards which annually beset this historic salt city, a heated controversy has swirled for several weeks around an Hispanic art exhibit. Clergy and laymen alike have protested several of the works, using such words as "blasphemy," "sacrilege," "anti-Catholic," "vulgar," "disgusting" among others. While Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Costello termed it "at least in bad taste," Msgr. "served as a reminder to the professed Religious of their solemn commitment to God, and as a non-verbal but eloquent sermon to all of the primacy of God in Christian life."

Emphasizing the themes of Pope John Paul II in his talk to the International Union of Mothers' General in Rome last Nov. 16th, Cardinal Krol said that the commitment to the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience "cannot be relativized by public opinion"; that "every (Continued on Page 9)"
CATHOLICS PROTEST

ANTI-RELIGIOUS ART EXHIBIT

(Continued from Page 1)

Over 80 percent of the artists are Hispano, he told reporters last week. And in his opinion, the Nazis were "the best artists we have ever had." 

The controversial exhibit has been heatedly defended by local art specialists and devotees. Even the director of the Everson Museum of Fine Arts in Syracuse, however, has asked a number of the artists to remove their work. 

On top of our Lady of Guadalupe picture of Christ as the Good Shepherd affixed a cheap glass ashtray the toilet tank is embedded a small warming device slightly lifted hidden in a human heart. And mysterious arms leading from Jesus' neck into what some observers claim is an obscene gesture. A young seminarian who viewed the work told me it made Christ "look like a fruit" (a homosexual). The artist admits his own "sensuality" but comments mysteriously "There is a God or there is a Church. I have sided with the spiritual!" (catalogue, p. 34). 

An anti-clerical note is obvious in yet another oil painting - untitled and not even listed in the catalogue for the exhibit. Wrought by R. Diaz (see above) it contains the same skeletal motif. A skull-faced bishop wearing his mitre is pointing a skeletal hand toward a rock upon which rests a human skull. Since there is no explanation one might infer that the dead hierarchy is pointing to a dead pope standing on the rock of Peter. 

Close by our Lady's image again suffers, it would seem in an oil titled Virgin of Charity of Caguas in which she appears so emaciated wearing a low-cut dress and holding an equally plump infant in an ornate bowl. 

Close behind the anti-God and anti-Church themes of these Hispanic artists there is an equally persistent anti-United States theme. Often it is very subtle and hard to detect; other times it is quite explicit as in, for example, a sculpture titled My Grandmother's Dresser Top by Louis Leroy. Here the figure of Christ wearing His crown of thorns is overshadowed by what appear to be the wings of an eagle - the symbol of U.S. oppression in Latin America. 

As of this writing the exhibit's offensive pieces remain in place. The Museum director has made it a point of honor not to give in despite the heated protests. He defends his actions in the name of art." The president of the local Spanish community, Nancy Vallareal, backs him up. A former nun and the product of what she calls a "conservative and a very religious family" she has told outraged Catholics, "You cannot judge a piece of art on the basis of its being moral or immoral, dirty versus clean. Try to judge art as art itself." (Syracuse Post Standard, March 7th, 1979). 

Syracuseans will be happy to see the exhibit depart; they are wondering out whether Catholics of San Antonio and Chicago will feel as they do.
The most offensive piece in the exhibit is a sculpture by artist H. Daccaro. It is a very ornate toilet that involved two dancers, a male and female. The male dancer is wrapping a brass pipe around the male dancer's head, and the female dancer is wrapped in a human skull with tiny spikes. The toilet is wrapped in a purple robe, and when the operator jabs him, the sculpture begins to move. The sculpture is a disturbing work that contains the kinds of religious sentiments. In the exhibit, one piece showed a religious saint in a服从 stance, noting that the artist was encouraged to find a rear view of the voice with a crucifix. One piece showed a plaster of the Virgin Mary, but it was crafted in a way that was most insulting to their religious beliefs, and some of the pieces showed a crucifix with a skull on it. Another piece depicted a sculpture of the Virgin Mary, but it was crafted in a way that was most insulting to their religious beliefs. One piece showed a religious saint in a服从 stance, noting that the artist was encouraged to find a rear view of the voice with a crucifix.