

Answering Degenerate Art in 1930s London: Unveiling the Hidden Truths

Amidst the tumultuous era of the 1930s, a groundbreaking exhibition emerged in the heart of London. "Answering Degenerate Art" audaciously challenged the notorious Nazi exhibition "Entartete Kunst" (Degenerate Art), which had vilified modern art as a threat to German culture.

The Seeds of Degenerate Art

In 1933, the Nazi regime unleashed a relentless campaign to purify German art. Modern movements such as Expressionism, Cubism, and Dadaism were deemed "degenerate," a term synonymous with mental illness and moral decay.



The Twentieth Century German Art Exhibition: Answering Degenerate Art in 1930s London (Routledge Research in Art Museums and Exhibitions) by Kean Birch

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 26151 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Print length : 242 pages



The infamous "Degenerate Art" exhibition, held in Munich in 1937, became a chilling symbol of Nazi censorship. Over 650 works by renowned artists

like Picasso, Klee, and Kandinsky were displayed with mocking captions and propaganda films.

London's Response: Answering Degenerate Art

In response to the Nazi propaganda, British artist and art critic Herbert Read organized the "Answering Degenerate Art" exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries in London in 1938. This bold initiative brought together a diverse collection of modern art, from abstract paintings to surrealist sculptures.

The exhibition showcased works by artists who had been branded as "degenerate" by the Nazis, as well as British artists who stood in solidarity against censorship. The aim was not only to expose the Nazi's cultural terror but also to celebrate the resilience of artistic expression.

Art as a Mirror of the Times

The works on display in "Answering Degenerate Art" reflected the turbulent political and social landscape of the 1930s. Many artists channeled their fears, anxieties, and hopes into their creations.

Otto Dix's haunting "The Seven Deadly Sins" depicted the moral decay that was seen as symptomatic of modern society by the Nazis. Pablo Picasso's "Guernica," created in response to the Nazi bombing of the Basque town of Guernica, became an iconic symbol of the horrors of war.

The Legacy of Answering Degenerate Art

The "Answering Degenerate Art" exhibition was a defiant act of cultural resistance. It demonstrated the power of art to challenge tyranny and promote freedom of expression.

Today, the exhibition remains a testament to the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity. It continues to inspire artists and activists who seek to expose injustice and celebrate artistic diversity.

"Answering Degenerate Art in 1930s London" is a compelling exploration of the historical and artistic significance of the exhibition. It is a reminder of the importance of protecting artistic freedom and a testament to the transformative power of art in times of crisis.

About the Book

The book "Answering Degenerate Art in 1930s London" is a comprehensive study of the exhibition and its broader historical context.

Published by Routledge Research in Art Museums, the book features contributions from leading scholars in art history, museum studies, and cultural studies.

Through in-depth research and analysis, the book sheds new light on the "Answering Degenerate Art" exhibition and its impact on the history of art and cultural resistance.



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