

# Art and Fascism

The Nazis condemned modern and avant-garde art as "degenerate," viewing it as a threat to traditional German values. This led to the confiscation and destruction of thousands of pieces of art, and the banning of certain artists and art movements. This suppression of artistic expression exemplifies the powerful and often destructive relationship between art and fascist ideology.

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## 1. Vocabulary for this lesson

artist	author	work of art	bonfire
landscape	censorship	decadence	composition
insult	affront	ideological	degenerate
publication	government	future	ideal
hatred	tragic	burn	denazification

How do you say these words in your language?

Test your partner on the words

e.g. can you give me an example of a sentence with the word '**decadence**' in it?

e.g. '**decadence**'. You can almost taste the decadence in the air of that once-thriving city, now nothing but overgrown ruins and faded opulence'.

## 2. Warm-up questions

What do you know about art from 1900-1945?

Futurism was a movement in art in this period. What sort of future did it suggest?

Have you heard of the following artists: Picasso, Dali, Natalia Goncharova, Alessandro Bruschetti or Max Ernst?

What do you know about art under Nazism and Fascism?

Are artists free people in your opinion?

Is art censored in some way in your country?

Have you heard about any controversial music, theatre performances or books that the authorities disliked?

Should art provoke strong feelings?

Can censorship sometimes be necessary?

Which books in your opinion should be banned or have very limited circulation?

### 3. Vocabulary (1)

Match the definition with the word

degenerate

censor

oppression

affront

work of art

bonfire

1. To suppress or restrict what can be seen, published, or spoken, typically because it is considered objectionable or harmful.
2. A creation (such as a painting, sculpture, or piece of music) that is considered to have value or aesthetic merit.
3. Prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control, often by the government or another powerful group, leading to the feeling of being weighed down or burdened by severe and unjust force or authority.
4. A large outdoor fire, usually lit as a celebration or for disposing of waste.
5. An action or remark that causes outrage or offense.
6. Having lost the physical, mental, or moral qualities considered normal and desirable; showing evidence of decline.

#### 4. Vocabulary (2)

Complete the table with the word forms

noun	verb	adjective	adverb
hatred	_____	hated	
Burner	burn	_____ burning	burningly
futurism	futurize	_____ future	_____
ideal	_____	ideal	ideally

Use the words to complete the sentences.

1. In order to stay interesting, the museum decided to ..... its operations by implementing advanced technology and design.
2. The ..... question in my head was a question I could not ask.
3. ..... only breeds more negativity and resentment, ultimately causing harm to both the hater and the hated.
4. She had an ..... vision of what her future career would look like, and she worked tirelessly to make it a reality.

## 5. Vocabulary (3)

Collocations – which are correct?

**publication** – which collocations are correct

academic

potato

online

legal

**affront** - which collocations are correct

deliberate

pleasant

personal

unintentional

**censor** - which collocations are correct

content

media

crush

information

**tragic** - which collocations are correct

truism

loss

event

ending

Can you use the correct collocations in examples? Test yourself and your partner.

## 6. Picture task

Match the words with the pictures.

artist	author	work of art	bonfire
landscape	censorship	decadence	composition
insult	affront	ideological	degenerate
publication	government	future	ideal
hatred	tragic	burn	denazification



a



b



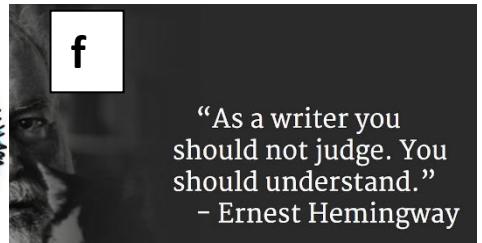
c



d



e



f

"As a writer you  
should not judge. You  
should understand."  
- Ernest Hemingway

Which picture has the biggest impact on you?

How do you think the people in pictures 'c' and 'e' feel?

What do you think picture 'd' illustrates – something utopian or dystopian?

What do you think is the warning in picture 'a'?

What can you deduce about the idea of freedom from the pictures?

## 7. Film (1)

From 5:00 to 6:30

### Task 1

Decide if you think these statements are true or false? Work in groups of three.

- Italy was famous for art only in the Renaissance.
- Futurists glorified the state.
- Futurists were against war.
- Fascism never became popular in Italy.
- Filippo Marinetti was an artist and politician.
- Fascism is a political order which promotes art.

Watch the film, listen to the speaker, read the subtitles.

### Task 2

In the same groups of three, check your answers.

What did you find interesting in the film?

What did you already know?

What didn't you know?

## 8. Film (2)

From 6:30 to 10:55

### Task 1

Watch the film. Make a note of any cities and people that are mentioned. Check your answers with a partner.

### Task 2

Watch the film again. Decide if these statements are true or false?

- The speaker talks about Warsaw.
- The Nazis organised the destruction of art and burning of books in 1933.
- There were only writers on the Nazis banned list.
- Both Jewish and American writers' books were burned by the Nazis
- The art of Paul Klee was loved by the Nazi party officials.
- Nazis had a policy of teaching the appreciation of art in their education system.

Check your answers with your partner.

### Task 3

What did you find interesting in the film?

What did you already know?

What didn't you know?

## 9. Film (3)

From 12:57 to 14:34

### Task 1 – warm-up

What do people in your country do to fight against racism?

Is racism an issue you hear much about?

Have you seen any campaigns in sport or in school?

### Task 2

Watch the film. Make a note of any kinds of art or social activity that are mentioned (e.g. poetry, sport, ballet). Check your answers with a partner.

### Task 3

Watch the film again. Which activities are mentioned?

- Poets against racism.
- Music against racism.
- The Red Book.
- The Brown Book.
- Social campaigns.
- Theatre productions.
- Facebook and Instagram campaigns

Check your answers with your partner.

### Task 4

What did you find interesting in the film?

What did you already know?

What didn't you know?

## 10. Quiz

Pablo Picasso painted the anti-fascist, anti-war painting Guernica – one of the greatest paintings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. How much do you know about him? Do the quiz and find out.

1. What age was Pablo Picasso when he painted his first painting?

- a) Five
- b) Nine
- c) Thirteen
- d) Fifteen

2. In which city did Picasso move to in 1900?

- a) London
- b) Rome
- c) Paris
- d) Madrid

3. What was Picasso's first word, short for the Spanish word for pencil?

- a) Pal
- b) Paz
- c) Piz
- d) Pio

4. How many works of art did Picasso create in his lifetime?

- a) Over 10,000
- b) Over 25,000
- c) Over 50,000
- d) Over 75,000

5. At what age did Picasso have his first art exhibition?

- a) Nine
- b) Eleven
- c) Thirteen
- d) Fifteen

6. Picasso was once a suspect in the theft of which famous painting?

- a) The Scream
- b) The Last Supper
- c) Guernica
- d) Mona Lisa

7. What was Picasso's reason for his father to give up art?

- a) Lack of talent
- b) Poverty
- c) Illness
- d) Picasso's superior talent

8. How long is Picasso's full name?

- a) 15 words
- b) 18 words
- c) 20 words
- d) 23 words

9. At what age did Picasso paint a bullfighter in his first ever painting?

- a) Four
- b) Seven
- c) Nine
- d) Twelve

10. What art movement did Picasso co-found in the early 20th century?

- a) Cubism
- b) Surrealism
- c) Dadaism
- d) Abstract Expressionism

## 11. Lesson round up - Discussion

1. Why is art important?
2. Is censorship ever right?
3. What is a typical vision of the future?
4. What is being done in your country to promote art?
5. Would you ever join a protest in defence of art?
6. Do you think the world has become a better place for art in the last 100 years?
7. Before this lesson, did you hear much about politics and art?
8. Does this lesson make you want to check out some artists and writers?
9. Can extreme ideologies ever produce great art?
10. Who are the most famous artists and writers in your country?
11. Were / Are they political?

## 12. Lesson round up - Review vocabulary

1. Make a list of five words from the lesson.
2. Test your partner on the words.
3. Choose two key words from the lesson
4. Which one point will you take away from the lesson?

## Answers

1.

artysta	autor	dzieło sztuki	ognisko
krajobraz	cenzura	dekadencja	kompozycja
obrażać	zniewaga	ideologiczny	zdegenerowana
publikacja	rząd	przyszłość	ideal
nienawiść	tragiczny	spalić	denazyfikacja

3.

degenerate (6)	censor (1)	oppression (3)
affront (5)	work of art (2)	bonfire (4)

4.

Compete the table with the word forms

noun	verb	adjective	adverb
hatred	hate	hated	
hater			
Burner	burn	burned	burningly
brun		burning	
future	futurize	futuristic	futuristically
futurism		future	
ideal	idealise	idealistic	idealistically
		ideal	ideally

Use the words to complete the sentences.

1. In order to stay interesting, the museum decided to **futurize** its operations by implementing advanced technology and design.
2. The **burning** question in my head was a question I could not ask.
3. **Hatred** only breeds more negativity and resentment, ultimately causing harm to both the hater and the hated.
4. She had an **ideal** vision of what her future career would look like, and she worked tirelessly to make it a reality.

5. (incorrect are in bold)

**publication** – which collocations are correct

academic      **potato**      online      legal

**affront** - which collocations are correct

deliberate      **pleasant**      personal      unintentional

**censor** - which collocations are correct

content      media      **crush**      information

**tragic** - which collocations are correct

**truism**      loss      event      ending

6      many possible answers

7.

- Italy was famous for art only in the Renaissance      false
- Futurists glorified the state.      true
- Futurists were against war      false
- Fascism never became popular in Italy.      false
- Filippo Marinetti was an artist and politician.      true
- Fascism is a political order which promotes art.      false

8.

- The speaker talks about Warsaw.      false
- The Nazis organised the destruction of art and burning of books in 1933.      true
- There were only writers on the Nazis banned list.      false
- Both Jewish and American writers' books were burned by the Nazis      true
- The art of Paul Klee was loved by the Nazi party officials.      false
- Nazis had a policy of teaching the appreciation of art in their education system.      false

9.

mentioned

- Music against racism.
- The Brown Book.
- Theatre productions.

10.

1 B

2C

3C

4C

5B

6D

7D

8D

9C

10A