

Conflict and Resistance

Theme 12: Conflict and Resistance

Introduction

Throughout history, groups and individuals have sought not only to maintain control over their own lives, but also to assert their power over the lives of others. Visual art has played an important role in documenting such conflict and resistance. It also has served as a means for expressing personal views on politics, war, social inequities, and the human condition.

Session

Review:

1. Share your responses to the comparison questions for The Urban Experience.
2. Share any other questions or ideas prompted by the previous assignment.

Watch the Conflict and Resistance video (30 minutes).

Consider/discuss the following:

1. What makes art an effective form of social or political protest?
2. What are the similarities and differences between a glorified battle scene and one that shows the horrors of war?
3. Invading armies have destroyed the art of the people they vanquished, or new regimes have destroyed art associated with their predecessors. What makes art images so powerful? Who ascribes the power to them?
4. How do such images of conflict and resistance speak to a universal audience?
5. At different points in history, and in different cultures or societies, governments have banned certain works of art because they were deemed unpatriotic or subversive. What role, if any, should the government play in defining what art is, how art can be made, who can make it, or the places and manner in which it is displayed?

Between Sessions:

Go to the Web site at www.learner.org/courses/globalart and:

1. Explore featured artworks from this program, including the descriptive text and the expert perspective commentary.
2. Read the chapter about Conflict and Resistance in the downloadable text.
3. On the Web, compare selected artworks by considering the questions posed. Prepare to share your responses by taking notes. Bring your notes to the next session.