

## Towards the Legacy of an Idea

It is important to leave behind the legacy of an idea. An idea that reverberates in hearts and minds after the stimulation of event and performance.

Let us introduce the legacy of an idea; an idea that produces what money cannot -- the impulse to create, in any form.

Such an impulse, regenerated, amounts to prosperity because it is attractive to the tourist and the citizen. People come to a town because it has the vibrancy of creative impulse; "destination points" such as museums and monuments and showcases are incidental to the "real" reason people go to Paris, or London or New York; of course the museums, and opera houses and openings are attractions; but the real reason people come to great cities is to "catch" some of the buzz, that vibrancy that is partially "showcased" in institutions and archival drawing cards; the true vibrancy is known and advertised by and in the heart of the city, better known in "Monmartre" than the Louvre, better known in Greenwich Village than the Metropolitan Opera, better known in Soho than the British Museum. Cities are loved, not for their "official" art, archival art, or art as "destination" point, but because these showcases are markers of a deep, primal, energy found in the fabric of that city's daily life. The "electric" of a city's creativity, actively present, is what the visitor hopes will "rub off". It is not a "pilgrimage" to "official" art that draws the pilgrim of art. It is the ambience of creativity that he or she hopes to come away with. This is central to understanding a city that is self-attractive, and attractive.

If we have proud showcases and forums for the arts -- theatrical, operatic, musical and literary, visual -- well and good, and people will come happily. But a city is not an excuse for cultural theme-parks. If creativity is not in the air, before the turn-stiles, and after the evening performance is over; if it doesn't extend itself to the streets and byways and cafes -- they leave remembering an event, not a city; or they will remember the city just as the happenstance place of the event. They will not remember a city whose highlights were the natural expression of the spirit of creativity in the city itself.

How do you evidence this spirit?-- In the energy of a people confident in their ability to take risks, to encounter each other, share with each other, speak with each other with the nonchalance and ease of citizens who are not self-conscious of norms and predictability.

Passion is the ingredient that attracts the tourist, the businessman and the wandering artist. Its manifestations can be seen, or not "seen", felt, or not felt, and it has nothing to do with the number of "sponsored" events and monuments and galas.

City thinkers become artists when they leave behind them the legacy of an idea; the statement of a simple eloquence, and the eloquent statement of an idea in a form understandable by all; for an idea that incites passion is poetry itself, and sustains the urban dream; to leave behind the legacy of an idea at the service of passion is a great civic gift. For a citizen enlivened by passion will make an art of the city.

And this notion is, at its base, hugely practical; for one knows that it is "spirit" that moves the "mind" to construct; and that "construction" without a foundation of passionate spirit is no legacy at all.

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