

#faithsartnotes

June 8, 2023

As we approach Second Saturday, I'd like to share some notes on the importance of embracing criticism when exploring and engaging with art in Sacramento + anywhere else.

Criticality, in this context, refers to the practice of analyzing and evaluating art with a discerning eye, considering its merits, message, and impact.

Being critical is not about being overly negative or dismissive; rather, it is a way to deepen our appreciation and understanding of the arts. By approaching art with a critical mindset, we empower ourselves to ask questions, delve into the artist's intent, and reflect upon the cultural and societal relevance of the work.

Embracing criticality encourages a dialogue between artists and audiences. By engaging critically with art, we can provide valuable feedback and constructive criticism, helping artists refine their practice and create even more impactful works. This interaction fosters a sense of collaboration and growth within our community.

I encourage each of you to embrace critical thinking. Let us celebrate the talent and dedication of our artists by engaging thoughtfully and openly about their work. By doing so, we not only support the growth of our arts community but also enrich our own lives through the transformative power of art. Together, let us foster a vibrant and thriving arts scene that reflects the unique character and spirit of Sacramento.



As a Seeding Creative grantee I am exploring alternative forms of art criticism and arts writing through #faithsartnotes. During 2nd Saturday in May '23 I asked friends, colleagues, artists, curators, and writers for their critical thoughts on what they've seen. Offering \$1/word for a 100-word brief recap to be included in my upcoming notes. Out of the ten people I asked - only one shared critical thoughts with me. Surely, they all had thoughts, but many had reasons why they would simply not share publicly.

From a very young age we are taught if you don't have anything nice to say don't say anything at all. and we still use that adage as we traverse the region viewing art.

This weekend, I beg you to say more than just "great show/nice work"... ask questions, consider alternative perspectives, contextualize, and reflect - NOT only on artists, but on our institutions, our art spaces, and on our curators, It really does benefit us ALL!

my own critical thoughts on Verge's "The First 10Yrs"

Verge Contemporary celebrated their 10-year anniversary with "The First 10Yrs" an inaugural biennial exhibition {closed 5/20/23}. The west side of the gallery was thoughtful and displayed ephemera from the last ten years underneath a 2012 12-foot Nathan Cordero painting. Gioia Fonda's 2013 YURT Model reminded us of the monumental installation at Crocker Art Museum a decade ago. The space was a beautiful reflection, but the rest of the gallery was filled with works from floor to ceiling - quite literally!

As a curator, I am critical of how exhibition design is used to contextualize and navigate space. I really wished that there were more moments of reflection with and conversations between the 50+ objects and artists included in the exhibition. I think it would have been great to have more information (wall labels? and/or a timeline?) about the artists and their relationship to Verge - and more photos + video throughout the last ten years!

Sacramento Poet Laureate + friend Andru Defeye

Highlight: La Lucha De Hoy art show in Del Paso. Guerrilla artists take over an old bank complete with visual art, performances, and street food vendors. Sacramento does this space-reclamation art so well. Hats off to Soy Tiger and Daniel Savala.

Room for improvement: Where are the buskers. The only musicians I found were on official stages and/or had been hired by venues and too many of them were playing covers. It felt like we were marketing to suburban tourism rather than highlighting and celebrating Sacramento's diverse and thriving local music scene. Also didn't see/hear about any poetry performances happening downtown..."



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