



WHY IS ART A HUMAN RIGHT?

François Matarasso MCB21, November 2021



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Traction
Opera co-creation
for a social
transformation

ART IS A HUMAN RIGHT

Entelechy Arts (London)

Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

Article 27. (1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)



UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS

SAMP, Leiria (PT)
Photo: SAMP

Inalienable

Individual

Equal

Independent
of citizenship



WHY IS ART A HUMAN RIGHT? WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ART ANYWAY?

The artistic act intends to create
and communicate meaning.



'Sunlit Spots', Zoran Pavelić,
Dotrščina Virtual Museum, Zagreb (HR)

Every matter of fact
is a matter of the
interpretation that
picks out the facts.

John D. Caputo, *Hermeneutics*



Geese Theatre (UK)

AN ACT OF PUBLIC MEANING-MAKING

Everyone has the right
freely to participate in
the cultural life of the
community...

Religious procession, Barcelona (ES)



AN ACT OF PUBLIC MEANING-MAKING



EXCLUSION FROM CULTURAL LIFE

"As peripheral as it may seem in hindsight, the cultural domain was the first from which Jews (and 'leftists') were massively expelled."

Saul Friedlander, *The Years of Persecution, Nazi Germany and the Jews 1933-1939*

AUSSTELLUNG DER NSDAP
IM HAUS DER KUNST AM KÖNIGSPLATZ
KARTEN ZU ERMÄSSIGTEN
VORVERKAUFSPREISEN **HIER**

Vermillion Mural Collective (USA)
Photo: Reyna Hernandez



WHAT ABOUT CULTURAL RIGHTS?

WHAT DOES PARTICIPATION MEAN?

THE 2020 ROME CHARTER

the right to participate fully and freely
in cultural life is vital to our cities and
communities [Read more >](#)



Share

DISCOVER

DISCOVER



SAMP, Leiria (PT)
Photo: SAMP

ENJOY

ENJOY

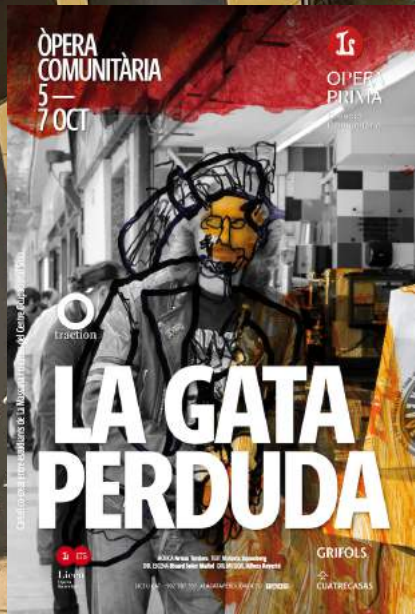
INO Community Opera, Dublin (IE)
Photo: INO



CREATE

CREATE

Liceu Community Opera, Barcelona (ES)
Photo: François/Matarasso



SHARE

SHARE



Liceu Community Opera, Barcelona (ES)
Photo: François Matarasso

PROTECT

PROTECT



INO Community Opera (Ireland)
Photo: Irish national Opera

WHAT ARE CAPABILITIES?

They are the answers to the question, "What is this person able to do and to be?"

They are not just **abilities** residing inside a person but also the **freedoms or opportunities** created by a combination of personal abilities and the political, social, and economic environment.

Martha C. Nussbaum. Creating Capabilities

**PARTICIPATION IN THE CULTURAL LIFE OF
THE COMMUNITY IS A HUMAN RIGHT**

**BECAUSE IT HELPS US TO PROTECT
ALL OUR RIGHTS AND ACQUIRE THE
CAPABILITIES TO BE WHO WE CHOOSE**

**THE TASK OF CULTURAL POLICY
AND INSTITUTIONS IS TO SUPPORT
OUR HUMAN RIGHTS AND
CULTURAL CAPABILITIES**

**TO DISCOVER, ENJOY, CREATE
SHARE, & PROTECT CULTURE**



THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION
[HTTPS://WWW.TRACTION-PROJECT.EU](https://www.traction-project.eu)



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