BY contributing to the discussion on Picasso I feel I must enter a controversy which has been the whole of our attitude to art, the role of the artist and the future of art. Before defining my own attitude it is essential to remark on the previous contributions.

In the main I agree with John Oldham's analysis, but I must also say that I find some of the definitions of art in his lecture, from which the article was condensed, Oldham said the definition was not to be taken as all-embracing, but was used in lieu of a clear one. I see no reason why we should not take a better one to apply to the present situation. I see no reason to stress this in the article, which is split-hairing.

In any case, I have yet to see art defined to satisfy more than a handful. Art is usually defined by writers and critics, seldom does the thinking artist attempt the definition; if he has a clear conception of what art means to him it is enough, without countering certain misunderstandings and misrepresentations.

However, in spite of the admitted inadequacies of Oldham's definitions, I think all are open to criticism and therefore must be to that extent subject to scrutiny. Here is the definition: "Art is that particular quality attached to the products and activities of man which makes it possible for us to understand and respond to the world within us as to the world without us."

Paul Mortier says "John Oldham's confusion is revealed in the tail of his definition, as distinct from the body of the works," which Oldham exemplified by saying that there has been a use-value plus art-value and another merely use-value. Oldham's definition in this simple statement, and when Mortier says Oldham is perhaps suggesting that only such handi- crafts are recognized, Oldham meant "a novel, a painting or a symphony" no use-value. This is an absurd piece of step-hope logic, it may be that Oldham does merely calls for a necessary or expedient separation of the two qualities for the sake of clarity.

Paul Mortier's article has a one-sided approach coupled with an over-eagerness to find a hole in Oldham's definition. If unfortunately Oldham's article led anybody to believe that he advocated formalism above other forms, it was because in advocating a broader approach to forms other than one's particular conception, it is necessary to justify formalism at a particular period in the development of our art. Again, the same argument could easily jump to the hasty conclusion that because formulating Picasso is the particular point of the article, it is the particular love of the writer.

Len Fox justifies Kartin's statement "forty years of barren experimentation with form in which the most talented modern artists have indulged in the society of others who do not share their rate of development and destroy themselves," by saying it depends on which way one interprets the statement. Taken in or out of context, Kartin's statement is open to criticism, and it does infer that the experiment "indulged in" by the most talented artists was barren. It is significant that instead of graphic expression the statement is a piece of loose thinking for the sake of gaining a point. If a man is said to be above classification—does not follow, by any stretch of the imagination, that he is said to be above criticism. John Oldham was quoting from a progressive artist who has high standards in his conceptions. The problem is that he does not think of this as an argument.

Len Fox's reasoning is suspect when he quotes Oldham's statement that "to be above classification means Picasso is above classification; he is, I think the spirit and moving force of our epoch ... and then assumes that this infers Picasso's art is idiotic songs."

"As a result of his work, his love of the writer. It is in his nature to bring any decision for society."

The future of art. In his lecture, from which the article was condensed, Oldham's contribution was not mentioned. It is not to be argued whether anybody in this century, progressive or otherwise, knows more than a few reproductions of his art, or whether his works are "skeptical" or "downright,"

He has shown where his contribution to the works of our masters, seeing in their works lofty aspirations and mature craftsmanship does not apply here, although it may be correct for many other countries more centrally situated than we are. It is doubtful whether anybody in this century, progressive or otherwise, knows more than a few reproductions of his art, or whether his works are "skeptical" or "downright,"

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