AP® European History
2003 Sample Student Responses
Form B

The materials included in these files are intended for use by AP teachers for course and exam preparation; permission for any other use must be sought from the Advanced Placement Program®. Teachers may reproduce them, in whole or in part, in limited quantities for noncommercial, face-to-face teaching purposes. This permission does not apply to any third-party copyrights contained herein. This material may not be mass distributed, electronically or otherwise. These materials and any copies made of them may not be resold, and the copyright notices must be retained as they appear here.
For every epoch in art there has been a reason. The style of the artists as well as their subject-matter originated from the social and political situation of the nation of their residence or origin. Just as Humanism was of great influence in the Italian Renaissance, where Michelangelo's David and Botticelli's Birth of Venus; Baroque art and 20th century art found its place in the society of the respectful time.

Baroque art was a response to Mannerism. The erotic aspects of the latter as well as its unproportionality (elongated figures) was distasteful to many, in particular the clergy. There was a demand for more elaborate and decorative art, especially from the Catholic Church which was extremely decorative in nature (Reims Cathedral eg.). Artists such as Caravaggio sought to paint religious subject matter in the
caravagisti' manner, using techniques such as "tenebroso." One such religious piece was "The Conversion of St. Paul." This painting illustrated a religious event in a much more natural manner than ever before. The "Madonnas and Child" were now of the past.

Furthermore, one cannot avoid the most famous piece of Baroque architecture: The Palace of Versailles. The palace was built by designed by Le Brun and Versailles for King Louis XIV of France so that he could keep tight, but discreet, control over the nobility. Typical of Baroque architecture is the emphasis on the central axes and the grand entrance. Everything follows a regular order and geometric form. The gardens, designed by Le Notre, also reflect this regularity with fountains connecting intersecting paths and every tree and bush trimmed into a geometric and aesthetic shape. The emphasis on such regularity reflects Louis XIV's control over the nobility. The gardens illustrate
man's control over nature in the way that the "Sun King" controlled his subjects and nobility. The "Hall of Mirrors" furthermore reflect the power of Louis XIV by its extravagance and luxurious golden designs.

Even though Hitler saw to that much of the political art was safely kept from the public, his firm hand did not keep away other artists of Europe. Freud and existentialist ideas of Nietzsche and Sartre had a great impact on the art of Surrealists such as Magritte and Salvador Dali. Dali who appeared in the 1950's was very much influenced by Freud's idea of dreams. Many of his paintings have a dream-like feature to them such as his
"Melting Clocks"

Other artists such as Picasso and Braque introduced cubism, although this was around 1910. Picasso's "Mademoiselles d'Avignon" caused major uproar; however, his later pieces such as the "Guernica" in memory of the Spanish civil war and bombing of Guernica on market day were quite influential. This is an example of political art.

In sum, artists were influenced by society and politics as much as society and politics were influenced by art. Examples of the latter would be artwork used as propaganda, such as images of strong leaders throughout history such as Roosevelt's portrait of Louis XIV and various other posters of Lenin and Stalin to spread communism.
The relationship between artists and society change throughout the centuries in many ways. The relationship mostly depends on a lot of the philosophical thoughts of the time and the political issues at the time too. For example, the Baroque era of art in comparison with 20th century art is very different. The Baroque societies relationship with Baroque art contained more emotions and attachment whereas in 20th century art there was less attachment to art by society as the art was more abstract.

In Baroque art there is one main piece of architecture which shows the extravagance of the era's art. The palace at Versailles was built with all the ideas of Baroque art tied in. The king, Louis, at the time wanted Versailles to be at the centre of the government and at the centre of French noble's lives. The building is decked with gold hallways and large ornaments which are characteristic of Baroque art. The gardens of the palace were also extravagant with
large man-made flower beds and shrubs. Painting were also characterised by bold objects and colours. Van Dyk a painter of the Baroque era painted what was common of the time. He used gold and pinks and paint strokes that were light and feathery. All these characters of artists and art demonstrated the ideals of society at the time which were still slightly idealised from the Romantic era. Only noble people were depicted and even then they were joined by beautiful landscapes and colours that would not have been present and throughout the Baroque era of art the troubles and problems of politics and economics were not depicted.

Art of the 20th century can be characterised as the exact opposite of the Baroque era. Obviously art had evolved and more styles were produced but society was still affected by art and art became even more of a propaganda. There were numerous styles around in the 20th century
though and two of these styles are surrealism and cubism. Both styles were abstract and unusual. Magritte was a surrealist painter and seemed affected by Freud and his analysis of dreams. Magritte's paintings were decked with normal colours but abstract, dream-like themes which were consistent of the times. Salvador Dali was also another surrealist painter who seemed, like Magritte, influenced by society and Freud's theories on dreams and society. Braque was a cubist cubist who seemed to draw inspiration from societies war and destruction and through his movement in art managed to express many people's feelings. So, in the 20th century, unlike the Baroque era, artists drew their inspiration straight from society as Magritte, Dali and Braque all demonstrate.

Artists and society always been related throughout centuries. But the relationship has always been slightly different.
was inspired solely by the ideals of society, whereas in 20th-century art, the artists expressed the ideas of society more than before, an idea which came from Realist artists.