

**The Significance of Art in Christian Connoisseurship Education** (*Abstract*)**Ruth Y.C. SUN\***

Art as a powerful teaching means is good for cultivating humanity in many ways. Through art Christian education can promote purification of the soul, develop spiritual values, establish friendship and social harmony, and stimulate our understanding of God's creative power and purpose.

Both the German philosopher George W.F. Hegel and the Chinese educator Confucius agreed on the power of art in human society. Scholars see the social function of art in promoting inter-personal and inter-racial as well as universal harmony. In both medieval European church history and the Chinese Tang Dynasty, people found the educational power of art. From the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle to the contemporary North American aesthetic educator Elliot W. Eisner, the significance of art in education is repeatedly emphasized. The education of art can be helpful to learners in their productive, critical and cultural ability. Art therapy has also become a useful and prevailing tool for psychologists. Music, paintings, sculpture, drama, dance, etc. can help liberate patients from their anxieties and worries and restore their confidence for self-actualization. Finally, the religious function of art is to develop human sensitivity towards the entire creation and the creator God who is the author of any and all that is true, good and beautiful.

Artists are gifted in their sensitivity to the ordinary things in daily life. They always find inspiration in things which ordinary people overlook. Christian theologians or educators can find artists helpful in promoting their ministry of communicating and teaching the truth. In fact, they will find art a powerful tool in education.

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