

THE ARTS: Gateway to a Fulfilling Life and Cultural Age

D. Paul Schafer

ENDORSEMENTS

D. Paul Schafer is the sage we need today. He brings wisdom and guidance about how and why we must live a life filled with arts and culture. He clearly articulates the benefits of an arts-infused foundation for individuals, but also shares the profound positive implications for society when they are collectively valued and used. In one of the world's most uncertain and catastrophic moments, Schafer has fiercely penned a beautiful and deeply powerful path forward. Embracing humanity's most potent tools of aesthetics, culture and the arts, he weaves together the threads of social connection, identity, health, learning and well-being. *The Arts: Gateway to a Fulfilling Life and Cultural Age* is a love letter to the arts and cultures of the world, and importantly an instruction manual for all of her inhabitants. It will make you laugh and cry, reconnecting you to something perhaps missing in your life that you couldn't name - until now.

Susan Magsamen, Executive Director, International Arts + Mind Lab, Johns Hopkins University, United States

Paul Schafer is an exceptional scholar and his latest book is a splendid gift to all who practice, create, savor, and value the arts in our lives. His message is both personal and world-changing, placing the arts at the core of a fulfilling life and the heart-center of human society struggling on the cusp of transformation. He sees power, insight and intelligence in the arts as ripe for addressing humanity's greatest challenges and seeding and enriching our personal lives. He urges us to become more conscious of culture and the many cultures in which we are immersed and in which we participate. As our consciousness grows, inspired by the arts, a new age beckons, what Schafer calls a cultural age, in which our highest goals and the ideals of humanity may one day be realized.

John J. Cimino, president and founder of Creative Leaps International and the Renaissance Center for Knowledge Integration, Interdisciplinary Thinking and Advanced Applications of Imagination, United States

This book is a masterpiece. From self to city, society to world, it demonstrates that the arts and culture hold the keys for humanity to creatively advance in these times of civilisational transition. In a personal, practical, deeply inspiring, and well researcher manner, Schafer opens our eyes for culture and the arts as the single most important resources in the development of our collective path ahead. His book is an inspiration for anyone engaged in the necessary renewal of the self, society, cultures, and the world.

Professor Alexander Schieffer, co-founder of TRANS4M Center for Integral Transformation, the Home for Humanity in France, and co-series editor of Routledge Transformation and Innovation Book Series.

The arts and culture are connectors, in good and troubled times, as seen with COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter, and are as essential to the changing global dynamic as they are nationally. D. Paul Schafer eloquently makes the case for the arts and culture in this accessible, articulate book. We ignore his insights at our peril.

The Honourable Patricia Bovey, FRSA, FCMA, Senator for Manitoba, Senate of Canada

This is a brilliant book by a leading author, researcher, and theorist about why the arts are essential - and more so in the post-COVID-19 world – and lay the groundwork for a cultural renaissance to replace the current system of thinking, feeling, and creating that has failed the vast majority of humanity and nature itself. Paul revisits his childhood experiences to bring to life the masterpieces in art, music, and literature that define our identity and humanity. He makes us realize that “when looked at in totality, there is little in the world or in life that is not concerned with the arts in one form or another.” This “must-read” book can provide you with hope when you need it most.

Ashfaq Ishaq, Ph.D., founder and chair, International Child Art Foundation, Washington, D.C.

Paul Schafer’s writings have become increasingly influential over the years, and his books are much discussed amongst those of us who strive to use arts activities to drive sustainable positive change within our lives, workplaces and communities.

Entertaining and thought-provoking, Paul's new book is sure to be of great interest for artists, arts organizations and policymakers, in both an academic and a practical sense, at this crucial time and in the years to come.

Grant Hall, founder, League Cultural Diplomacy. Australia

Paul Schafer has devoted his whole life to bringing culture, alongside, or, inclusive of, nature and community, science and technology, economy and polity, to the fore. For it is such culture, more than anything else, that serves to highlight the uniqueness of a people, and, as the renowned African writer Laurens van der Post has said, each culture is an idiom of beauty. Nobody has done more than Paul to bring such an idiom to light.

Dr. Ronald Lessem, co-founder, Trans4m Communiversity Associates, Africa, the Middle East, and elsewhere in the world

Paul Schafer's new book addresses the profound changes and challenges brought about by the global pandemic. COVID-19 has demonstrated more clearly than ever before the value of the arts in helping people to cope with mental and physical stress, isolation, and troubling uncertainty. While offering a realistic evaluation, his assuredly optimistic assessment points us towards the opportunity that he sees for the arts and artists to have a much more profound, positive and lasting impact on humanity. Read and be inspired, uplifted, and transformed.

John Hobday, Vice-chair, Canadian Network for Arts & Learning and former Director, Canada Council for the Arts

In our era of global interaction, the multitude of life-worlds has made cross-cultural understanding an imperative of survival. In this timely book, Schafer makes us aware of the holistic dimension of culture and its potential for dialogue. This is all the more important under circumstances where identity issues are increasingly exploited to sow division – at the national, regional and global level. The author convincingly argues that the global order of the future cannot be based on economic interests alone, and that peace among nations and peoples requires greater knowledge and mutual appreciation of all cultures, understood in an all-encompassing sense.

Dr. Hans Köchler, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, University of Innsbruck (Austria), Member of Faculty, Academy for Cultural Diplomacy (Berlin, Germany), Member of the University Council, University of Digital Science (Berlin), and President, International Progress Organization (NGO in consultative status with the United Nations)

A critical and long-drawn out birthing process is in progress, and Paul Schafer is the key midwife to the process. His *The Age of Culture* was brought into the world through his caring concern for all of us. And he has just delivered another book, - *THE ARTS: Gateway to a Fulfilling Life and Cultural Age* to ensure the nourishment and growth of the *Age of Culture*. We now have a definite living pathway to a creative and compassionate future.

Dr. Nadarajah Manickam, Chair Professor, Xavier Centre for New Humanities and Compassion Studies, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

REVIEWS

A compelling and inspirational read! Paul Schafer's latest book is probably his greatest yet as it reminds us how the arts touch and dance with our lives in so many ways. Providing examples from furnishings, food and pop music to classical arts, Schafer makes the point that no-one lives without art. According to Schafer, learning to interpret, appreciate and practice art is one of the greatest gifts in life.

In this book, he points to the dangers of only learning about one culture and the need to make other cultures visible and recognizable. A message we strongly share at IGCAT (International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism where we advocate for better recognition of diverse cultures). The message is that creativity not conformity will move us out of the present crisis brought about by the economic age (an age that he convincingly demonstrates has provoked both degradation and segregation in our current world).

I strongly recommend that you not only read this book but that you share his urgent message. As a bonus, Schafer shares with you an almost encyclopedic list of inspiring music, poetry and paintings from all genres that highlights the richness and

fascinating world of arts and music. It was a joy to be reminded and rediscover great masterpieces while reading his motivating words.

His key message is that bringing value to life is as simple as introducing citizens to the tools to enjoy, revel, explore imaginatively, create in harmony and sensitivity within nature and with one another. In order to bring about a more balanced world we need to mend our fragmented (environmental, societal, political, economic) world and the journey to do this is complex, so dealing with this will require ingenuity, creativity, humanity, compassion and the capacity of facilitation. Therefore it brings hope to see an increase in educational courses (all around the globe) dedicated to the training of cultural managers who hope to help citizens “unlock the sublime and maybe even the divine” through artistic and cultural diversity.

Human fulfillment as a universal goal is certainly gaining ground as a concept and Paul reminds us that for this to happen we need to urgently shift from an Economic Age to a Cultural Age. In his final chapter, he strongly advocates for the Cultural Age as a holistic approach that can provides the context for “joy, happiness and fulfillment in life” as well as the backdrop to “enjoy good health, well-being, spirituality, contentment, and the experience of the sublime.”

Wise words indeed.

Diane Dodd Ph.D. President, International Institute for Gastronomy, Culture, Arts, and Tourism (IGCAT)