

LES BEGAY

WHAT IS ART?

What is art is a broad question, not only because of the multiple forms of art but what art means to an individual.

Art is music, literature, paintings, pottery, weaving, spoken word, acting and sport to name a few forms. Each of these forms there are subsets that expand the art. If you enjoy art in a specific form, you may not know about other forms or subsets that are foreign to you. There are so many forms of art, lovers of art usually focus on what appeals to them and don't often venture into other forms. Do they want to go beyond their area of comfort and knowledge? It happens but usually as a result of someone introducing them to the art

I'm an observer of art, not a creator of art and my preferences tend to be music and literature. I appreciate the evolution and history of Blues music. The adoption of Blues by contemporary musicians has enhanced the music and expanded the audience. I think with all art forms it has to evolve to grow beyond its original form and wider acceptance.

Literature is an art form as old as time and has many subsets. Non-fiction is an art form in my opinion because all authors start with the same facts but then have to create the story and engage the reader with their writing and storytelling.

An area I would like to discuss is art represented by culture. Paintings, literature, pottery, weaving and storytelling are all forms of art every culture creates. As a Native American, each of the 574 federally recognized Nations have their interpretation of their culture. Their cultural art doesn't have wide acceptance in the art world mainly due to exposure and in many cases their art is not considered viable art. The intricate, delicate, and complexity of Native American pottery is as beautiful as any in the world. Weaving has been an expression of every culture and my Dine' culture is known for their weaving. In my culture

weaving was taught to us by Spider woman and in each weaving, there is an opening so Spider Woman can exit and help in future weavings.

I think art for many years has been judged by historians, academics and art critics. We have been told what is art, how to view it, how to read it, how to interpret it and how to accept it. Art and all its forms evolved by artists expressing themselves, taking a new direction, developing a new or controversial thought and it usually finds its audience. Art is what moves you, inspires you, affects you, makes you happy or sad. Art is as diverse and complex as the individuals who call it art and not what a critic writes.