

# The Parliament of Dreams:

## Why everything depends on culture

**François Matarasso**

Does art matter? That is a fiercely contested question these days, given an additional twist as the rich western democracies cut back public spending after the 2008 banking crisis and the consequent recession. Just three short words, but two of them are as slippery as language comes. How people respond to the question depends almost entirely on how they interpret the words 'art' and 'matter'. One problem is that words that seem straightforward in everyday use become less so the more they are discussed. Art is not a difficult concept when parents are asked whether it should be part of their child's school curriculum: people have a clear idea of what that means and there is usually a high level of support for art in education. But once discussion turns to actual examples, consensus about meaning rapidly falls away. Is art what artists produce? If so, who is an artist? Are they born or made? What is the difference between a good artist and a mediocre one? What comparative value can be placed on different work? And, does it matter?

The question is so tricky because it envelops two complex, intertwined and unresolved questions people have asked themselves since they have been people: what is a good life (what matters) and what is the purpose of creativity (why do people make art)? This is not the place to rehearse 3,000 years of philosophical debate. Were I even capable of it, it would not be necessary to my purpose, which is only to propose a pragmatic answer to that question: not definitive but good enough. In other words, I want to show why art matters, in principle, so that it is possible to move on to more practical and urgent questions about what might follow for cultural policy in a democratic society.

People's ideas of art have varied across time and cultures. That is obvious not only from a comparison of the material culture of, say, 16<sup>th</sup> century Benin, Enlightenment Scotland or Tokugawa Japan, but also from the very different social uses and meanings of that culture. But the creation of art—in tangible and intangible forms—is consistent in all human societies. Why? Because it is through such creativity that people grapple with the meaning of their experience, and seeking purpose in existence seems to be one of humanity's defining characteristics. The creation of stories, images, sounds and performances allows humans to reflect on, articulate, externalise and share their experiences. Through artefacts, people seek to make sense, individually and collectively, of their experience of being alive. Shared meanings—those that become accepted by groups of people—become cultures, the complex languages of signs that are taken as read by those who know them and mystify, fascinate or repel those who don't.

All artistic creation, from medieval frescoes to Chinese opera, from folk song to the tags spray-painted on subway walls, shares the fundamental purpose of articulating its creator's values and, in doing so, seeking affirmation from others. That dialogue, with the self and others, internal and external, is basic to being human. George Steiner argues that:

'There is language, there is art, because there is 'the other'. We do address ourselves in constant soliloquy. But the medium of that soliloquy is that of public speech – foreshortened, perhaps made private and cryptic through covert reference and association, but grounded nevertheless, and to the uncertain verge of consciousness, in an inherited, historically and socially determined vocabulary and grammar.' (Steiner 1989:137)

So culture matters because it is how human beings express their values to themselves and to each other. And those values shape *how* they go about meeting their needs, leading to the endless variety of dress, faith, buildings, food, conduct and other cultural diversity we take for granted in the world; as Pierre Jourde says, 'the production of meaning requires the production of differentiation'.<sup>1</sup> How much those differences and the meanings they express matter to people is evident in the proportion of their resources they choose to dedicate to decorating a temple, preparing for a wedding, or dressing a baby.

Whatever we make today of the medieval Christian worldview, we must recognise its foundational importance to European people, societies and cultures of the time—and perhaps ask ourselves about our own worldview, values and culture, hard as that can be to do. Future generations may see the profound influence of money on 21<sup>st</sup> century Western culture more clearly than we do.

But we are still free to make of medieval Christianity what we will. Because culture generally and art specifically expresses values, it does not follow that we must share, endorse or admire those values because we enjoy the artefacts that carry them or the creativity that produced them. We can admire Athenian democracy and remember that women were not citizens, or love the theatre of Sophocles while recognising Greek society's dependence on slavery. Culture is a good, in so far as it plays an essential part in helping humans to make sense of their existence and communicate profound and complex meanings with each other. It does not follow that the sense they make and communicate is itself good. Not all meanings are true; not all meanings are good; not all meanings matter.

But what about art? It is true that the words 'art' and 'culture' are now often used interchangeably, but I do not intend such elision of meaning here. If there is a blurred line between the two domains, as the examples that I have used so far might suggest, one important distinction between them is the degree of self-consciousness and particularly self-criticality involved. Culture may be understood as *how* people do the things that they need to do to live and prosper: culture adds meaning (value) to what needs to be done. It is largely unconscious because everyday life would become impossible if we had to stop and ask ourselves about the cultural significance of the sandwich or underwear: we'd never get anything done. Art, on the other hand, tries precisely to stop us, to invite us to become conscious of what we're thinking, feeling and doing. It rarely needs to be done, which is one reason why some people question whether it matters. For those of a strongly utilitarian frame of mind, there is no obvious need to write or read a book, to put up a picture or to watch a performance. The French writer, Jean-Paul Kaufmann, describes a friend who:

'Maintains that literature serves no purpose, that it is not real life, that it has never removed or changed anything in the world.' (Kaufmann 2007:142)<sup>2</sup>

For Kaufmann, who had recently lived three years of captivity in Lebanon during which irregular access to books was a lifeline, this attitude is deeply challenging. But there is a paradox here: people don't put effort into things that bring them no return. The mythical punishment imposed on Sisyphus, to push a rock up a hill and then watch it roll down again, was intolerable because of its essential pointlessness: like hard labour in a Victorian prison, the cruelty lay in its purposelessness. Again, the historical evidence shows that societies with far fewer resources than we have today were still ready to invest them in producing monuments, art,

music and stories. Art may not have an obvious utility, but it is evident that human beings need it.

Part of the explanation is that creating and receiving art can be deeply pleasurable. People enjoy listening to stories, going to the cinema or dancing a tango, just as much as the storytellers, filmmakers and musicians enjoy creating their work. That is also true of much cultural activity, of course: preparing and sharing a special meal is a pleasurable as well as a meaningful experience. Where art starts to differentiate itself from the broader field of human culture, where it starts to acquire a distinctive character and function, is in the degree of self-consciousness with which it engages with meaning and values. It uses sophisticated techniques, such as symbolism, metaphor and allegory, to produce intellectual and emotional effects through which it aims to communicate values, ideas, and feelings. Its non-rational methods—even when obscured, as they often are in the consciously rationalist cultures of post-Enlightenment states—are powerful and can produce transformative results. Perhaps most importantly art can question, re-imagine, undermine, critique and dream about existing values and meanings. Art is a toolbox that enables human beings to interfere with their culture. Art allows us to become more conscious of the cultural values that shape our thinking and behaviour and so to question, change and grow. We don't think or live like our grandparents partly because of the changes that art—and I make no distinction here between forms, aesthetics or values, or so called high art and popular art—has produced in our imaginations and sensibilities.

That is a big claim and it requires some justification. After all, it could as easily be argued that it is the extraordinary technological advances of the past two centuries that have done most to change the world. It is true, of course, that the invention of telecommunications, flight and antibiotics has had a transformative impact on human life. But it is the imagination, expressed through art, that has made these new experiences meaningful. The automobile is a fantastically useful tool, but its hold on the Western imagination, through film and music, has nothing to do with its practicality. We may be born to run, racing in the street or a wreck on the highway but we dream our modernity behind the internal combustion engine. Those dreams have physical consequences as more and more people aspire to own this symbol of modern freedom: in the last five years, car ownership in China alone more than doubled from, 21 million to 51 million. One estimate forecasts that in 30 years there will be 2,907 million cars in the world, compared to 646 million in 2005. Such is the power of our dreams (BERR 2009:21).

Human inventiveness has brought equally profound, though perhaps more sustainable, changes to art itself. The discovery of photography was a remarkable scientific achievement but its impact on our visual sense depended on artists reacting to the new medium, both by creating a new language for it and by re-imagining the existing visual language of painting to take it along paths that photography could not follow, before the creation of digital imaging and processing. The invention of the novel, itself made possible by the coincidence of a growing educated readership with disposable income and industrial methods of production, distribution and marketing. One consequence was to make visible—most obviously in the work of Charles Dickens—millions of poor, marginalised or exploited people who had barely figured in art before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The poor became not merely visible, but imaginable individuals capable of generating empathy: the impact of Tiny Tim, Oliver Twist and Jo the crossing sweeper on Dickens' readers was profound and contributed to the social changes of the Victorian period. More recently, Willie Loman, Atticus Finch and Tom Joad changed America as much as a hundred senators.

And here's another counter-intuitive proposal: those texts have influenced more people who have not read them than they have changed those who have. Indeed, I chose them as examples because I have never read *Death of a Salesman*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* or *The Grapes of Wrath*, a gap in my knowledge that may be shared by some of you. Even so, those texts create characters that have independent existences, living in and influencing the minds of millions who have never encountered them directly. The French critic, Pierre Bayard, created a small sensation recently, when he published a book entitled *Comment parler des livres que l'on n'a pas lus?*, which was translated as *How to talk about books you haven't read*, losing its interrogatory question mark. Without that question mark, the English version presents as a kind of instruction manual for those tricky social situations where you don't want to feel less clever than the next person—an intellectual good manners guide. But Bayard's thinking is much more subtle and important as he outlines the complex relationship people have with books, which he divides into those he has never heard of, those he's skimmed, those he's knows about and those he's forgotten. Brave as it is for a professor of French literature to admit to having only skimmed Paul Valéry or having forgotten one of his own books, it is also both true and liberating. Our relationship with books, and with culture in general, is far more complex than is usually admitted: less a matter of ticking off the entries in the Observer's Book of Art, more a continual and fluid imaginative interaction. The key word in Bayard's title is 'talk'. His purpose is to encourage people to speak freely about their cultural experiences as equal participants and he concludes that:

All teaching should work towards helping those receiving it to gain sufficient freedom in relation to works of art to become themselves writers or artists (Bayard 2007:162).<sup>3</sup>

Today, fiction continues to enable us to think and talk about aspects of our lives that we find hardest to approach directly. John Sutherland argues, for example, that ‘grown up discussion of race’ is now rare except in novels such as Andrea Levy’s *Small Island*, Philip Roth’s *The Human Stain* or Zadie Smith’s *On Beauty*. He maintains that:

Outside fiction, race is such a hot-button issue that politicians and press will handle it only with pious platitudes and hobbled correctness (Sutherland 2006:194).

Art avoids being fenced in by such restraints for two reasons. The more obvious, but less important, is that since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Western societies have come to accept a concept of art as transgressive, even confrontational. The artist came to be seen as the courageous innovator leading the way towards new and, it is assumed, better ways of feeling, seeing and being. Misunderstood, even reviled in their day, artists are vindicated when the rest of society catches up, perhaps, as in the emblematic case of Vincent van Gogh, after their death. So art today has a licence to provoke, at least in Western liberal democracies, though there are limits to that, both within those democracies and in their international relations—an echo of the soliloquy and public speech evoked by George Steiner. Internally, some issues of sexuality, drugs or religion remain dangerously off-limits, as artists such as Nan Goldin and Robert Mapplethorpe have found. In a wider context, since the collapse of communism as a global ideological force, faith has often been the frontier on which different value systems (different cultures) have confronted each other, most obviously with Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses* or the cartoons of Mohammed published in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in September 2005.

The second reason why art can open up new or difficult ideas is older and more universal than this Modernist concept of licensed transgression: it is the essential ambiguity of art. Whereas in much formal communication—and most obviously in law—human beings strive to achieve a single, clear expression, art embraces the possibility of multiple interpretations. It is an active dialogue between creator and receiver, in which neither has complete control. Though there are limits beyond which an interpretation is simply perverse (and unlikely to be persuasive) an artist cannot determine how a reader, listener or spectator will respond to their work. Art works are not static holders of meaning: they are recreated in each encounter. For Alberto Manguel:

It is the reader who reads the sense; it is the reader who grants or recognises in an object, place or event a certain possible readability; it is the reader who must attribute meaning to a system of signs, and then decipher it (Manguel 1997:7)

However many hours I put into preparing this essay, it is impossible for me to be sure of how it will be heard (though I don't think it qualifies as art). Both sides of the exchange enabled by the work of art are creative. But whereas in law the impossibility of reaching a definitive meaning would be catastrophic, in art it is essential and liberating. It allows artists safely to imagine possibilities, to create meanings or to advocate values that might be censured or censored if they were expressed unambiguously. It allows audiences the same freedom of interpretation. Deniability is everything.<sup>4</sup>

The difficult life of Dmitri Shostakovich is a good illustration of this, not least because it centres on the essentially abstract nature of instrumental music. As a Soviet citizen and artist, Shostakovich worked under the constant threat that the state would take offence at his music: he was twice denounced and feared imminent arrest. Today, 40 years after his death and 20 years after the collapse of the USSR, bitter debates still rage about whether he was an artist who compromised with state terror or one who bravely resisted it through the subtle messages of his music. People with no experience of the world in which he lived fiercely contest his place in the classical music pantheon, despite the obvious fact that music is abstract: whatever it communicates is inescapably a matter of interpretation. Challenged in 1966 to say what his songs were about, Bob Dylan replied, 'Oh, some are about four minutes, some are about five minutes, and some, believe it or not, are about eleven or twelve' (Gray 2000:2).

The difficulty of defining art is often seen as a problem. Actually, it may be the most important thing about it. Since you cannot ever define what a work of art is about, you never get to the end of debating its meaning. We should be so glad that Shakespeare never left a diary in which he expounded his views of antisemitism or feminism: instead, he gave us a peerless mirror in which to imagine our own preoccupations. Manguel sees this as an essential characteristic of art:

True experience and true art (however uncomfortable the adjective has become) have this in common: they are always greater than our comprehension, even than our capabilities of comprehension (Manguel 2010:9).

It is also, of course, why politicians cannot control art. After all, if artists can't control how their work is interpreted, or even whether it gets any attention at all, why should politicians believe that *they* could? But the failure of the world to

change in the ways sought or predicted by artists (or politicians) does not mean that their work has no effect—only that its effects are not predictable and controllable. The young people who reinvented popular music in the 1960s often had no larger ambitions than being Top Of The Pops but their art had a revolutionary impact on culture, the economy, society and politics. The difference between intention and effect has been a difficult one for politicians and commentators to understand in the growing discourse about the economic and social impacts of culture. Since the late 1980s, states following neo-liberal consumer economic policies have increasingly accepted the argument, and the growing body of evidence, that art and culture can produce a wide range of desirable social outcomes, including economic growth. But, rather like the Futurists and Surrealists who expected to conjure new worlds into being merely through the rhetoric of their manifestos, policy-makers have often fallen into the trap of believing that if something can be, it will be. The simplistic command and control management methods transferred from commercial enterprise to public service have failed to deliver consistent and predictable policy outcomes, which, rather ironically, was predictable.

But that failure should not be taken as evidence that the arts and culture do not have the capacity to change individual lives, to strengthen communities, to stimulate economic activity or to bring about wider social change. They do all those things and more besides. The issue is one of expectations and a misplaced image of human life as a simple series of rational and therefore understandable causal relationships.

Where then does all this leave arts policy? What is the place of culture in a democratic society and how can elected representatives decide whether and in what ways to encourage—or perhaps restrict—the production and consumption of art? Whatever else it is or does, in a democratic society, art enables citizens to think about, debate and negotiate their changing values. It is in this sense that I describe art as the parliament of dreams. Parliament, from the French ‘parler’, to speak, is the symbolic and actual heart of a democracy (though of course the structures and processes of democracy extend in many other ways through civil society), the space within which a people’s elected representatives gather to discuss and decide fundamental principles, which are enacted as laws, and short term actions, set out as policies. As already suggested, in this politico-legislative forum, the reduction if not the elimination of ambiguity is a central value. Agreement is sought on the basis of a clear and shared understanding of the matters under consideration: confusion is anathema to this formal process, though it inevitably arises. The Tasmania Supreme Court’s 2011 ruling concerning the legal protection of the Jordan River



levee Aboriginal site, is one example of the struggle to agree the interpretation of law.<sup>5</sup>

But human beings are not simply rational beings who express themselves in words, and act following a conscious assessment of ideas. Reason is an essential governor of human conduct, but it would be unreasonable to believe that it is all or even enough. People act also as a result of their conscious and unconscious feelings, beliefs, and values, their past experiences and not least their physical being. All that is expressed and reacted to, contested and celebrated, in the vast, fluid conversation that is a society's artistic life, its alternative parliament, where everything that can, and much that cannot or dare not, be said finds an outlet and, perhaps, an audience. Sometimes the connection between this cultural arena and parliament itself is close: one might argue that the sympathetic treatment of homosexuality in theatre, literature and art sometimes showed society to be in advance of its own legislatures and that the articulation of those values contributed to persuading parliamentarians of the need for more liberal positions towards gay rights. But the connections between debates about values in the arts and the formal processes of democratic governance are generally more complex and harder to identify. Crucially, though, there is interplay between these two forums—the governmental and the artistic—and no one is in control, or even fully aware of, the continual negotiation of meanings and values taking place. Political leaders and activists meet in Copenhagen to debate action on climate change but for millions of others these questions exist imaginatively through works such as Cormack McCarthy's *The Road*, Roland Emmerich's film, *The Day After Tomorrow* or perhaps even *Planet of the Apes*.

So, if the vast complex and uncontrollable discourse of a nation's and the world's artistic life is an essential part of how humans individually and collectively shape their beliefs, separate from but interacting with the formal processes by which societies are governed, it follows that being able to take part in that discourse is as important, to a citizen in a democracy, as being able to take part in electoral processes. And full participation in that artistic discourse—the parliament of dreams—is not only a matter of receiving the artistic work of others, but also of creating one's own, of having the freedom not just to listen but also to speak. This is the purpose of speech in Pierre Bayard's conception of how people engage with art. Full, free and equal participation in democratic society must include full, free and equal participation in its cultural and artistic life, something that is in fact implied in article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that:

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.<sup>6</sup>

This statement, the last of the substantive rights in the Charter, can sometimes appear as an afterthought, a kind of non-essential bonus. But it should be evident that, given the importance of art in shaping human beliefs and behaviour, this is far from being the case. In fact, being able to exercise this right is one of the guarantors of other human rights. The case of Nazi Germany is extreme in every sense but it illustrates how exclusion from cultural life is a necessary stage in stripping people of their legal rights and eventually of their human identity. The early steps in what Lucy Dawidowicz described as ‘The War against the Jews’ were aimed simultaneously at preventing the self-representation of Jewish Germans in the country’s artistic and cultural life while promoting the hideous caricatures of them that culminated in the 1940 Veit Harlan film, *Jud Süß*, which was seen by over 20 million Germans in the first years of the Second World War, including, on the orders of Himmler, all SS and police officers (Friedländer 2007:100).

Even in less extreme conditions, being able to represent oneself culturally within the public space of the society of which one is part is a fundamental right. Democracies like to equate their political systems with freedom but, as de Tocqueville observed in his study of early 19<sup>th</sup> century American democracy, they always risk instituting a tyranny of the majority (Levine 2007:14). Sections of the population with different social values or cultures are at risk of marginalisation and stigmatisation by majorities enabled through their control of democratic processes to pursue their own interests exclusively. In Europe’s recent history, such minority groups have included disabled people, immigrants, gays and lesbians, people with mental illness, young people, travellers, the poor and many others including, though in no sense a minority, women. In these instances, a political, social and economic marginalisation—enacted through the formal decisions of democratic institutions—is paralleled by a cultural and artistic marginalisation in which each simultaneously reflects and enables the other. Key to this is being denied access to cultural self-representation while being represented (objectified) by more powerful cultural voices: being spoken about, described and defined, whilst simultaneously being denied the basic right of self-definition.

The slow emancipation of women during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for example, was enacted not only politically but artistically too, by pioneers such as Käthe Kollwitz,

Freda Kahlo, Georgia O'Keefe, Judy Chicago, Carolee Schneemann or Vivienne Binns among countless others. The emergence of community arts movements in the 1960s were another creative response to the invisibility of the cultural identities of many people in an artistic world still dominated by a largely male, white and socially privileged section of society. These advantages can be defended not only through legal, economic and social means but through cultural ones as well. Questioning the artistic value of alternative voices can be a powerful way to keep people in their place. Oodgeroo Noonuccal's first book, *We are Going*, was received with hostility by many critics on its publication in 1964. Some crudely questioned whether, as an Aboriginal person, she could have written it; others saw only a simplistic use of conventional language, now recognised as a subversion of traditional English verse forms through an Aboriginal perspective.<sup>7</sup> As Adam Shoemaker observes in *Black Words, White Page*:

Poetry which was critical of White Australian society was invalidated because it did not conform to a limited conception of the 'permissible' forms of that society's literature (Shoemaker 2004:182).

Similar strategies are widely evident today as arguments over power, authority and resources are sublimated into aesthetic debates that can more easily pass as disinterested. Although there have been setbacks, compromises and confusion in the subsequent half-century, these and other radical artistic movements have been central to establishing the more open and democratic cultures now evident in most liberal democracies and the more inclusive and tolerant societies on which they depend and which they foster.

Crucially, it is not only the previously marginalised who have gained by this more open and pluralistic cultural space: it is the majority as well, in at least three ways. First because dissenting voices test the degree of freedom of a democracy, helping to protect against the emergence of majority tyranny. The extent to which a democratic culture can tolerate or even accept dissenting views is critical, and that tolerance, whilst always requiring the defence of law, exists in people's everyday interactions. As the philosopher Leszek Kolakowski says:

Toleration is best protected not so much by the law as by the preservation and strengthening of a tolerant society (Kolakowski 1999:40)

Secondly, the majority benefits from an increased range of diverse cultural expression because new ideas, new sensibilities and new ways of knowing often come from the margins. The alternative perspectives of previously marginalised

groups, such as women or disabled people, have been no less important to the evolution of culture and society than the more frequently celebrated innovations of the avant-garde. It is only by maintaining and increasing a space for alternative ideas and expressions of value that a culture can stay vital.

Thirdly, the confrontation with cultures, artistic expressions and meanings that we find difficult to understand is actually a confrontation with ourselves and our own values. It enables us to become more conscious of our own assumptions and unquestioned beliefs and that—even if the result is only to strengthen us in those values—is essential to staying alive.

It would be naïve to suggest that the promotion of cultural diversity should be the primary goal of cultural policy in a democratic country. States and societies only exist because of a core of shared beliefs and values—what I have already characterised as a culture. It is both inevitable and legitimate for a society to affirm and, if necessary, to defend its core values. The final article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says as much when it maintains that nothing in its text may be interpreted as legitimizing any act ‘aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein’. On the other hand, a confident and enlightened state, which genuinely seeks to promote the full, free and equal participation of citizens in its democratic life, will also value cultural diversity as a test of its freedom, as an asset for development, as a check on its own values and as an essential part of human discourse. To return to George Steiner,

‘Serious painting, music, literature or sculpture make palpable to us, as do no other means of communication, the unassuaged, unhoused instability and estrangement of our condition. We are, at key instants, strangers to ourselves, errant at the gates of our own psyche. We knock blindly at the doors of turbulence, of creativity, of inhibition within the *terra incognita* of our own selves.’ (Steiner 1989:139).

Cultural diversity is a fact of life. Artistic controversy is a fact of life. The contestation of cultural values is a fact of life. The test of a democratic culture is the extent to which it can accept or even support that diversity and contestation without losing confidence in its own values. The quality of a democracy is not just a matter of its governance and representation. It is also about the freedom, richness and quality of the parliament of its dreams.

## References

Bayard, P. 2007, *Comment parler des livres que l'on n'a pas lus?* Paris: Editions de Minuit

- BERR 2009, *China and India: Opportunities and Challenges for UK Business*, London: Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
- Friedländer, S. 2007 *The Years of Extermination, Nazi Germany and the Jews 1939-1945*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson
- Gray, M. 2000, *Song and Dance Man III, The Art of Bob Dylan* London: Cassell
- Kaufmann, J-P, 2007, *La maison du retour*, Paris : Gallimard.
- Kolakowski, L., 1999, *Freedom, Fame, Living and Betrayal: Essays on Everyday Life*, Penguin: London
- Levine, C., 2007, *Provoking Democracy, Why we need the arts*, Malden: Blackwell
- Manguel, A., 1997, *A History of Reading*, London: Flamingo
- Manguel, A., 2010, *A Reader on Reading*, New Haven: Yale University Press
- Shoemaker, A., 2004, *Black Words White Page: Aboriginal Literature 1929–1988*, ANU E-Press, online edition at [http://epress.anu.edu.au/bwwwp\\_citation.html](http://epress.anu.edu.au/bwwwp_citation.html) (accessed 24.08.2010)
- Steiner, G. 1989, *Real Presences*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press
- Sutherland, J. 2006, *How to Read a Novel, A User's Guide*, London: Profile

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> « Pour produire du sens, il faut produire de la différenciation », Jourde, P. 2010. « Francophonie ta mère », Confitures de culture blog, *le Nouvel Observateur* 05/07/2010  
<http://bibliobs.nouvelobs.com/blog/pierre-jourde/20100705/20213/francophonie-ta-mere>
- <sup>2</sup> « Il prétend que la littérature ne sert à rien, qu'elle n'est pas la vraie vie, qu'elle n'a rien changé au monde. ».
- <sup>3</sup> « Tout enseignement devrait tendre à aider ceux qui le reçoivent à acquérir suffisamment de liberté par rapport aux œuvres pour devenir eux-mêmes des écrivains ou des artistes. »
- <sup>4</sup> The question of interpretation, both the performer's and the listener's, was thrown sharply into relief by the Joyce Hatto scandal, when it transpired that recordings celebrated as coming from 'the greatest living pianist almost no-one has ever heard of' turned out to be doctored versions of commercial recordings by other pianists. See Rod Williams 'Joyce Hatto: The Great Piano Swindle', *Intelligent Life*, September 2007, available online with a postscript at <http://moreintelligentlife.com/story/joyce-hatto-the-great-piano-swindle> (accessed 25.9.2010)
- <sup>5</sup> 'Legal bid to protect bypass artefacts' ABC News online 17 August 2010; see:<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/08/17/2985174.htm> (accessed 25.8.2010); 'Bypass legal bid fails' ABC News online, 25 February 2011; see: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/02/25/3148764.htm?site=northtas> (accessed 24.2.2013)
- <sup>6</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml> (accessed 8.8.2010)

- 
- <sup>7</sup> 'The white critical community responded to her work by describing it as being for example 'bad verse, jingles, clichés, laborious rhymes'. Her work's very interesting for using very traditional English verse forms but simultaneously challenging them from an aboriginal perspective and I don't think white critics really got that'. Peter Minter, on 'Poetry of the Forgotten People' BBC Radio 4 (produced by Charlotte Austin and Diana Bentley and first broadcast on 15 Aug 2010: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00td4v8> accessed 24.8.2010).