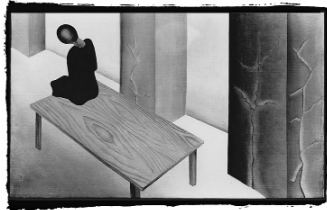


ART OF DISSENT



The Language of Despair II – “Girl in Hall” by Willy Fick

Themes

- Loneliness
- Abandonment
- Decay

Before the Viewing

- In a totalitarian state, would the art galleries be empty? Why or why not?
- What symbols could an artist use to depict loneliness or decay?
- The Nazis were burning books in 1933 and removing art from galleries by 1937, how would this affect what artists chose to depict?

Discussion

- Although there is nothing to suggest that the young woman is in an art gallery, how does this work enhance our understanding of the power of art during the Nazi regime?
- Describe at least three ways “Girl in Hall” and “Nude” are companion pieces.
- Why do we see both the figure in “Nude” and the woman in “Girl in Hall” from the back?
- How would Jewish viewers of “Girl in Hall” relate this work to the Nuremberg Laws enacted in 1935?

Activities

- Include at least three elements of Willy Fick’s language of despair, as shown in “Nude” and “Girl in Hall”, to create your own piece.
- Take your copy of “Girl in Hall” and add one other person or thing into it. Be prepared to explain why you added what you did. You may extend the confines of the frame to fit in your addition.
- Write a note and leave it anonymously beside the girl on the bench. The teacher has each student select an anonymous note to read out loud.

Extensions

- Do research to find three artists whose works were being removed from Germany’s art galleries. How do the cracks in the walls in “Girl in Hall” reflect what was happening to these artists?
- Edvard Munch and Kathe Kollwitz created powerful images of despair. Select one work to contrast with Fick’s language of despair. Why do you think the language is different?
- Stones from the River by Ursula Hegi and “Girl In Hall” show how cracks start in society. Using these two works, answer the question: What forces are at play in Nazi society that make the cracks get larger instead of them being fixed?