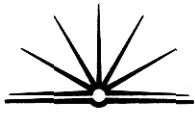


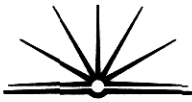
Question 5

as the audience changes, so too does the meaning of artists' works. Uya Kabakov and Anselm Kiefer, as artists, have both been subjected to regulation and preconceptions of what others think art should be. Both have been suppressed in their aim in addressing the fear and oppression evident in their respective societies. These artists address their audience asking them not to just question the past and its consequential repercussions but also to embrace it and not to deny it. Each revolving in completely different circles, these two artists have challenged their audience to evoke a catharsis and a sense of empathy. ~~Each~~



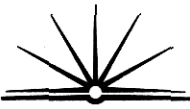
Keife and Kabakov adopted different artmaking practices and hence proffered a different tone; one mythologically symbolic and one satirical.

The fundamental difference between these artists are their positions within the society's they embellish in their art. Ulya Kabakov was born during the Soviet regime in Russia. During his childhood, he gained a deep distrust for the Soviet Union, acquired from the time spent in public institutions, namely the Leningrad Art School for Children. According to Kabakov, "Like everything in the Soviet Union, outward appearances didn't represent what was inside."

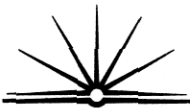


Kabakov began his career during the Soviet Regime as a children's book illustrator. This was one of the only "official" forms of ~~art~~ artmaking. The Soviet Union regulated that artworks could only be made pertaining to the style of 'Socialist Realism.' The Soviet art system was divided into themes, styles and subjects, ~~and~~ aimed at producing a subverted form of propaganda. This stifling system meant that any creative efforts outside of this criteria were unofficial, illegal and repressed.

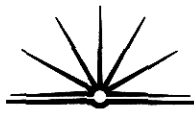
In 1965, Antonelli Trombadori, a member of the Italian Communist party, exhibited Kabakov's work in his "Contemporary



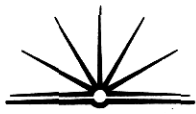
alternatives II' exhibition in Italy. According to Kabakov, Trombadori "wanted to demonstrate that we (Russia) had another art other than official art." As a consequence of this exhibition, Kabakov could not find work in any Soviet publishing house for four years and had to adopt a pseudonym. In 1986, 11ya Kabakov was offered a grant from the Kunstverein, an artistic institute in Salzburg, Austria and received permission from the government to leave. Through this grant, Kabakov was given the opportunity to work outside of Russia and currently resides in New York.



Kabakov's installation 'Monument to a Lost Civilisation' featured in the Sydney Biennale of 2000. The installation consisted of two "architectural models", one of a "Museum of Soviet History", the other of a city park to act as a roof and digress disguise for the museum. Under the guise of an "archaeological exhibit", this work satirises contemporary Russian society's treatment of the past as ~~seems~~ seemingly normal. ~~But~~ Ewan McDonald wrote of the work, "The intention is not didactic; but rather the artists (Ilya + Emilia Kabakov) celebrate the poignancy and humour associated with storytelling." Within that humour lies a

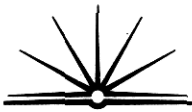


sediment of provocation of thought. Kabakov completed his installation 'Ten Chandeliers' at the time he was leaving the Moscow Conceptualist circle which included Eric Bulatov and Komar and Melamid. The installation represents an apartment. The concept is derived from the communal living arrangements that became a symbol of the active oppression of the Soviet Union. The life-size scale and hyperreality created through the use of real objects, transmits to the real life experience of the inhabitants of ~~see~~ these apartments. The actual inhabitants are not depicted and thus the individual/responder becomes immersed in the environment.



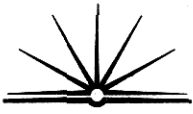
This creates a sense of empathy between the Soviet inhabitants and the responder. Kabakov creates interplay with his installation and the "outward appearances" of the Soviet Union. Audiences now must embrace the past evoked through Kabakov's works as they are now beyond repression. His works be moved from being an attack on the Soviet Union, as considered by the government, to a means of a catharsis for the oppressed.

Anselm Kiefer experienced a less strict form of oppression. Kiefer was born at the end of the oppressive Nazi Regime in Germany. ~~As a result~~ As a result,



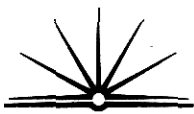
at the end of WWII, after a difficult period of recovery, Germany began to expand culturally. Keifer was concerned with ~~the way~~ the way Germans suppressed the past in an effort to move on. Instead, Keifer insisted on exploring the depths of the wounds that lay on the surface of German society. However, Keifer was not initially accepted by his audience as the feelings and emotions his works evoked were often too painful for many Germans to deal with.

Keifer contributed eight large canvases and 17 books to the 1980 Venice Biennale. It was his paintings which gained most critical attention, among which were



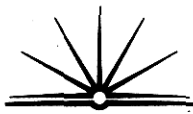
'Germany's Spiritual Heroes' (1973), 'Parzifal' (1973) and 'Ways of Worldly Wisdom' (1977-1980). His uncharacteristic use of woodcuts in 'Ways of Worldly Wisdom' (1980) is paradoxically indicative of Keifer's manipulation of surface and texture. The use of unsophisticated mediums create the effect of spontaneity. ~~This~~ Possessing this quality allows Keifer's works to evoke the richness and power of raw emotion and irrational impulse, which are ultimately the depths that Keifer must reach for a catharsis to take place.

Keifer depicts various historical, philosophical and political figures of Germany's past. The harsh tones



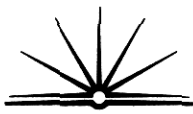
and linear formations of these depictions, as well as the marks thrown over the faces that act as vectors to the fire in the centre, disregard any respected attitudes associated with formal portraiture. In this way, Keifer's ^{work} can be seen as a satirical, iconoclastic ~~art~~ representation of the influences that German society drew on. In it a time when Germany was still trying to find its own identity after the war, Keifer's ~~attempted to have~~ works were not accepted well.

Peter Iden wrote of ~~Keifer's~~ ^{Keifer's} works in the Biennale ~~works~~ "The Keifer takes the opportunity to demonstrate his ideologically confused and thematically overloaded works." Petra Kipphoff wrote for Die Zeit magazine,



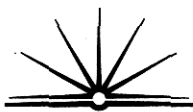
"The Keifer-esque theatrical and applied theatricality must be completely unbearable for the many who were nearly exterminated by such German megalomania." Keifer was not welcomed by his audience as they viewed his work as blasphemous and disrespectful.

"Glaube, Hoffnung, Liebe" (1984-1986) is a depiction of a war torn landscape, ~~being~~ in this painting, Keifer used shellac, lead and paint. The lead propeller in the centre is a macabre reference to a plane either shot down or having crashed into the landscape. Written on the propeller, are the words 'Faith, Hope' and 'Charity' in German. This simply



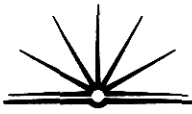
injects into the work a comment on how Germany may return as a nation to living by these words. Keifer explains his reasons for such dark depictions as "You cannot paint a landscape once a tank has passed through it." Keifer he doesn't agree with the acceptance of German society to just repress the past.

Interestingly enough, the Israelis welcome Keifer and his works and his attempt at embracing the past. Once Keifer found this acclaim and the opportunity to work outside of German borders, German audiences began to accept him as well. Peter Kipphoff, the same critic, wrote of Keifer's retrospective, "He aesthetically



conglomerated technique of Keifer is a way to sensitively address the pain of an entire ~~past~~ generation. "

Olya Kabakova and Anselm Kiefer were products of an ~~oppression~~ suppression, in different ways. The governments and ~~audiences~~ national audiences of these two artists took offence to their works and thus rejected them. Ultimately, both these artists were attempting to reach those who had suffered in an effort to heal. Both these artists were also able to reach those who perhaps did not know or did not understand the nature of these detrimental regimes. These



artists' works' meaning was
misinterpreted but has fortunately
remained to be appreciated
and accepted.