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Art Lives!

**A Posting to New York Arts Magazine Online Forum,
In Response to Art Notes: A New Agenda, by John Perrault**

October 24, 2002

Thank you for stating what needed to be stated—that art is adrift—and for challenging us who believe that art is important to human life to think and do something about it.

At its most fundamental, "art" is artifice—the thoughtful acts of a thinking species attempting to change its environment to its own liking—and at its most sophisticated, art is an entity taking on a life of its own—a dynamic system calling upon its past (hence the "neos") and inventing its future (hence the "posts") as the sum total, greater than its parts, of countless works by countless artists both renowned and anonymous, studiously and unwittingly influenced by and influencing one another.

Perhaps the aimlessness or stasis in various quarters of art is simply the reflection of a generally aging population, having lost the verve of youth and/or comfortable in its familiar ways; but perhaps the organism we call art is a grand pupa, dormant to the world ("as if art were asleep") but actually undergoing significant, perhaps even dramatic structural changes, which may start at the most microscopic level but may not become apparent at the macroscopic level until there is an appropriate, yet unpredictable change of "seasons."

Perhaps, then, it is the role of the artist to be but one "gene" of the organism of art—to express oneself as effectively as possible, within the context of the feedback (the "critiques" you mention) from other components of the genome and within the limitations and positive influences beyond our control from the environment at large.

Art can be both a domestic animal, in service to us, and a wild beast, incapable of being tamed. But as long as artists keep creating, art persists ("because you have to"), art consumes (and is con\$umed), art reproduces and evolves ("pluralism" becoming ever more so)—art lives!