

It's my opinion that one of the worst things that we have created for ourselves is the critic. You know, those people who make a good living telling us what they think about stuff.

We have movie critics, theater critics, art critics, music critics... the world is full of people who are telling us what we should like and dislike.

As the poster boy for starving writers, I used to think that it would be a great job to have. Just think, I could go to the movies for free and then go on camera and tell everyone what I thought about it. Pretty nice job, right? Not only do I get into the movies for free, but I also get paid a generous salary to tell everyone that I thought the movie stunk!

But there is something that really bothers me about these critics. I learned a long time ago as I started out in the music business that when you work in the creative arts... i.e. - music, movies, TV, radio, art, writing and all ... you enter into an 80/20 relationship with those who pay the rent.

If I am on stage performing my songs, 80% of the song is what I put into creating it and the other 20% is what the audience takes from it. The absolute worse thing I could do as a performer is to stand up there and tell everyone what the song is all about. It denies my audience the right to their 20% of the song. By interpreting my songs, I am not letting my audience be a part of my music.

The same holds true in Art, Movies, creative writing and any other form of entertainment. When I write my columns, I put 80% into formulating an idea and working on a story that I think you would enjoy. But everybody who reads the column gets their full 20% share by taking my words as they will. You may think I'm a genius or you may think your paper is wasting a lot of ink on a fool like myself... whatever you think, is fine with me... it's your 20% and I'll respect that.

So I ask myself why do we need these critics telling us what we should think about our entertainment? It's like we are paying these people to take away our 20% of the entertainment market.

Critics are an interesting group. Theater critics almost never have anything good to say

about a show. In fact, in many cases, production crews get nervous and start packing when they get a good review.

Movie critics are a bit too pompous. If they knew half as much as they think they do, they'd be big time producers in Hollywood instead of small time movie critics on our evening news. Isn't it funny how these critics can destroy a movie, and then a few weeks later, when given the opportunity to interview the star of that same movie, they unload lavish praises for being such a wonderful actor/actress?

Art critics ought to be politicians. By the time they are done critiquing an art show, you haven't the foggiest idea of whether they liked it or not. You can never interpret their interpretation.

But I guess it's all pretty harmless. Most people understand that we all have our own taste when it comes to entertainment.. We pretty much hold on to our 20% of the entertainment business.

Critics in the Arts are pretty much the same as the world of marketing - they think they serve an important service to the world, when the truth is they really serve no real value to the world and should not even exist.

But I still have to admit as a starving writer that it sure is a cool way to get into the movies for free.

Just A Thought