

A d d r e s s
of the State Minister for Education and Culture,
Professor Dr. M a u n z ,
to be delivered on the occasion of the opening of the
general assembly of the International Association of
Art Critics.

The Bavarian State Government on whose behalf
I bid you a cordial welcome, sees with great pleasure
that the International Association of Art Critics has
chosen the Bavarian state capital as the place for its
general assembly this year . We regard this not only as
a sign for the increasing attraction Bavaria and its
capital hold for the organizers of international con-
gresses and meetings, but also as a proof of the tradi-
tional, deeply rooted reputation of Bavaria as a country
with an extensive cultural programme and of Munich as a
city which has always been a home of preference for the
arts.

It seems to me that the association of art critics
in an international organization as it came about as
early as in 1948, has been an important event from dif-
ferent aspects. It happened only few years after the
last war at a time when the reforming of international
ties between the people in the field of art had not yet
gone far beyond the first stages. The fact that already
in those days the art critics from different countries
came together and cooperated seems to have been a far-
sighted deed. No doubt, this has contributed to the
development of an exchange between the countries, the
associations, and the expert representatives in other
fields of the furtherance of art, too.

In bidding you a cordial welcome today, I do so not
only as the representative of the Bavarian State Govern-
ment, but also as the head of that Ministry whose task
includes the care of public furtherance of art and thus
the promotion of the Fine Arts in Bavaria. In this
complex field, we consider the art critic as one of our
allies because he contributes through his work to the

necessary intellectual discussion, thus inspiring and stimulating the work of the academies and of the museums, the exhibitions as well as all the efforts directed at the further development of the Fine Arts. In this connection it is essentially important for him to devote his energy particularly to the appreciation of new art, a field which scholars naturally enter into with reluctance. Here especially he is again and again moving on virgin territory without solid ground. In view of the manifold and often rapidly changing forms of expression characteristic of the artistic development of our time, he fulfills a task of great responsibilities. It is difficult, but extremely interesting at the same time. Through his work, he helps to sift the chaff from the wheat in living art, to recognize and to encourage true creative talents, to unmask imitators, and, above all, to be a mediator between the artist and the public which certainly does not always find it easy to establish the right relationship with the works of art in our time and to understand the artist's motives for his pictorial expression. It would be demanding too much from the art critic, no doubt, if we expected him to make a fullproof analysis in every case or even to show, like a prophet, the direction art will take in the future. However, his training in art history, his personal contacts with the artists, and an experienced eye put him in a position to suggest methods for the right approach to the work of art to the interested public and to indicate connections which facilitate the understanding of the artistic development and of its results. This way independent art criticism has become an indispensable instrument furthering art, the main purpose of which is always to re-establish the connection between the artist's creation and the art lovers and those who are interested in art. This connection must not consist of a thoughtless contemplation, but of a serious occupation with the works of art.

I should like to express the wish that this year's general assembly may strengthen your intention to carry on this task which is particularly important in our time, and that the assembly may consolidate your ties with your professional colleagues all over the world. I hope very much that during your short stay here you will also have an opportunity to see and to experience some of the things Bavaria has to offer to the art lover, and that you will long cherish the memory of these few days spent in Munich.