

# Defend Detroit's Artists

Fifth Estate Collective

1967

America—the world—lives in a period of transition of its entire way of life. On the one hand we live in utter confusion and yet on the other we are beginning to see the immense possibilities that are now available to us to construct a HUMAN society, a society in which man will be released from thousands of years of struggle and toil he has put himself to. Moreover, we live in a period of great spiritual discovery. We find ourselves at the beginning of a human epoch that will see each of us—all men—MAN flower into the beautiful creative animal he is.

It was at the initiation of all past great civilizations that the youth of the society, the students and artists, dedicated their lives and fortunes to experimenting with, developing and creating the new social forms, the brilliant cultures of more attractive, meaningful and useful ways of life.

Now, as often in the past, these creative young men and women are the victims of abusive harassments from the police and bureaucratic officials who are threatened and terrified to see young men and women moving in the direction of human possibilities the old society can no longer offer.

It was exactly such a community, THE ARTISTS' WORKSHOP, that the Detroit Police waged an unprecipitated brutal attack against last Tuesday evening, January 24. Disregarding any respect for these student and artists basic civil liberties and rights of privacy, these confused men arrested 56 young people under the pretense that some of the students and artists occasionally experimented with mild euphoric chemicals and herbs. This was the police excuse! not its reason.

## Police Exposed

Actually the police and bureaucratic officials are terribly frightened by the students spirit of love and energy. They do not understand the world and universe around them anymore. These old men are no longer able to manage the affairs of the community we live in. They are beginning to sense that not only the artists and students but intelligent men and women throughout the community are beginning to become curious about themselves and the natural creative energies they possess.

The officials know that the citizens of Detroit are getting tired of their lies and the senseless wars their local and national governments propagate. So they thought to attack the youth hoping to scare them back into meaningless jobs, the deadly machinery of insensitivity and war, and hopeless loveless syndromes. In fact there is good reason to believe that Mayor Cavanagh and Police Commissioner Girardin are guilty with the Detroit Police Department of the most flagrant kind of political opportunism. There is suspicion that they waged this attack against the most creative and curious group of Detroit's youth to cover up for their own inability, out of clumsiness or purpose, to control the real crime the city is plagued with. The police have been under investigation for months by one grand jury and another is about to convene.

The Detroit Police along with Cavanaugh and Girardin attempted this political move to cover up the charges made by Mary Beck of the Detroit City Council of police inefficiency in the fight against real crime in Detroit. This

statement would have made front page news but for the hastily called attack on the innocent students and artists. Does anyone in Detroit believe that these poets, musicians and students are criminals? Doesn't every citizen know that the police spend the state's money and time chasing teenagers, students and artists because it can no longer arrest any real criminals. Why don't the police arrest the large sellers of opiates (e.g., heroin, the real narcotic) instead of harassing a community of artists and students who occasionally experiment with mild euphoric chemicals and herbs. Chemicals and herbs which many experts claim have consciousness expanding and spiritual properties as recent articles in LIFE and THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY have testified to.

The police and current administration should be exposed for the fumbling political opportunists they are. The old prohibition laws against mild euphoric herbs and chemicals should be repealed. The real criminals should be arrested. THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY SHOULD COME TO THE DEFENSE OF THESE INNOCENT, HARASSED YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN.

## **Defense Committees Forming**

Already a COMMITTEE TO DEFEND DETROIT'S STUDENTS AND ARTISTS is in the process of formation along with the ARTISTS' WORKSHOP, THE FIFTH ESTATE, THE ACLU and the newly formed COMMITTEE ON STUDENTS RIGHTS at Wayne State University. A press conference will be called soon and a special edition of the FIFTH ESTATE is in preparation to expose the Detroit police.

The ARTISTS' WORKSHOP is more active then ever with meetings, readings, concerts and publications. Since the police attack they have hung a huge 30 foot sign across the front of their buildings at 4863 John Lodge which reads:

HEY PEOPLE NOW SMILE ON YOUR BROTHER

LET ME SEE YOU GET TOGETHER AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER RIGHT NOW

The Artists' Workshop should be supported by all of the citizens of Detroit.

On Wayne State University's campus the COMMITTEE ON STUDENTS' RIGHTS plans to investigate the university's complicity in the raid on the workshop and is challenging the university to debate over its right to interfere with the students' off campus activities. These young men and women will go on working and creating. Support them.



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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/february-1-15-1967/defend-detroits-artists>  
Fifth Estate #23, February 1-15, 1967

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