

ART IS JUSTICE

Edwidge Danticat on how literature connects us

Novelist Edwidge Danticat draws from her own experiences with immigration in her writing. "For me, that's worth exploring, because the more we know about people, the less likely we are to generalize about them, to stereotype them, to be prejudiced against them."

This video is part of the #ArtIsJustice series. Throughout U.S. history, artists and cultural leaders have been at the forefront of social change. Today, in the face of growing intolerance and widening inequality, artists stand up to these injustices, reminding us all that Art IS Justice.

Transcript begins.

[The words "Art Is" appear, followed by scrolling words...Empathy, Political, Hope, Powerful, Social Change...it stops at Connection. Art Is Connection.]

Edwidge Danticat, novelist: The power of art is that it can travel throughout the ages.

[At a bookstore, Edwidge reads aloud from her book, "Claire of the Sea Light".]

"There were times, though, that she wanted to just take off, leave Ville Rose, leave Haiti and never come back."

Edwidge: In my writing, I've covered immigration. We're always going through cycles of immigration where immigrants are scapegoated. I was separated from my parents for eight years, in Haiti, while they were working here in the United States. So, for me, that's worth exploring, because the more we know about people, the less likely we are to be prejudiced against them.

[Edwidge reads aloud in a filled auditorium.]

"There was not much English spoken in the factories where she worked. Everyone there had come from someplace else."

Edwidge: When we read a book or when we hear a story, we know that storyteller better than sometimes we know people in our own lives. We can take away many layers of ignorance by sharing our stories.

[The words "Art is" appear, followed by scrolling words...Connection, Expression, Change, Creativity, Healing...it stops at Justice. Hashtag Art Is Justice. Agree? Share this video.]

[Ford Foundation logo: a globe made up of a series of small, varied circles.]

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End of transcript.