

NEW GOSPEL OF WEALTH / THE FUTURE OF PHILANTHROPY

Art for justice featuring Agnes Gund, Catherine Gund and Maria Hinojosa

Philanthropist Agnes Gund and daughter Catherine Gund, founder and director of Aubin Pictures, discuss the inspiration and impact of the Art for Justice Fund with Maria Hinojosa, founder of Futuro Media Group.

This video is part of a collection of conversations with leaders, thinkers, and activists from philanthropy, business, the arts, tech, and beyond outlining bold visions for the future of philanthropy.

Transcript begins.

[Art for justice. Agnes Gund, philanthropist. President Emerita, Museum of Modern Art. A white woman with a blond bob haircut, wearing a black patterned buttoned-up shirt with black pants. Catherine Gund, founder and director, Aubin Pictures. A middle-aged queer white woman with long brown hair, wearing a black suit with a black button down open-necked shirt. Maria Hinojosa, founder, Futuro Media Group. Anchor and executive producer, "Latino USA". A Mexican American woman with shoulder length dark brown hair and bangs, wearing a dark blue sleeveless dress, and large silver heart earrings.]

ANNOUNCER: Please welcome Agnes Gund, Catherine Gund, and Maria Hinojosa.

[applause]

MARIA HINOJOSA: It's great to be here today in New York City, to be on stage with Agnes Gund and Cat Gund. When you looked at that beautiful Lichtenstein in your dining room and said, "I love this painting, but I'm going to, I'm going to—" and you've given many away. But this one there was a particular reason, and it was to create the Art for Justice Fund. Just tell us what that was like, that process of understanding that you were going to let go of this piece of art that you loved and adored. But you were doing it for a very concrete reason.

AGNES GUND: Well, I had seen Ava DuVernay, um, "13th" the night before or a couple nights before that. And, I thought it was so pivotal to me. I hadn't seen anything like that before. I had thought about giving it away somewhat before that, and then I thought this would be the way to do it.

MARIA HINOJOSA: So, Cat, you are Aggie's daughter, and so can you make the through line. Because one of the things you said about your mom, which I love, is that you said, "The thing about Aggie is that she's free of conventions. And that's why she ends up doing something so unconventional."

CATHERINE GUND: I should just start by saying that, you know, in our house, like, art is the first and last thing. But, for us, it's like the beginning and the end—art was here before and it will be here when mass incarceration is over. And it will be here when philanthropy has put itself out of a job. Because philanthropy is reliant on inequality, then when we eradicate inequality we will not have to have the philanthropy that we see and understand now. And that's part of what I appreciate so much about what Aggie did with Art for Justice. As she said, she's been giving money away forever. She's also been giving art away to museums and friends and universities. And she's been incredibly generous, but what was really different this time, I think, was her recognition of the urgency in the moment—that this was a time when the right and the left were coming together in a really unusual, unique space. At this time, as we know, it's the only bipartisan issue right now perhaps—maybe, decarceration. That it's a time when formerly incarcerated people are in leadership, are getting the attention and the spotlight and the time and the money to do what they need to do to lead us out of this crisis. And it also was something that she didn't want to see last. If the idea is to get rid of mass incarceration, why would you endow a fund that lasts and goes on forever and ever? So, I think, for her this sense of a five-year spend-down was really instantaneous. I mean, it just, it didn't occur to her to do it otherwise. Because she wanted to get the money out. So it's not about, sort of, how do we figure out power sharing in an endowed fund for years and years.

MARIA HINOJOSA: I just want to ask you about—leave us with some thoughts about what it is to be somebody who is prepared to be filled with risk, to be motivated by dreams and possibility and justice. That's a space—you embody that for so many of us, Aggie. You don't have to be here doing this and giving away, you know, selling your most prized artistic possession. And yet you do.

AGNES GUND: Well, I don't think—I shouldn't get the credit for it. It's not ... There are so many things that must be done in this world. And there are—so many of the people today have been saying that this is what counts. That people do this and that they give to these places where they can or they try to start things that have some resonance and are important for things. I think this is what philanthropy is about. You say something.

[applause]

CATHERINE GUND: This, to me, is what philanthropy is about, but it's also what art is about. Art is about imagination, and justice is as well. It's about being able to see that there could be something that's not there right now and working towards making it happen. I appreciate when people talk about statistics and data, but that's not when I cry. And, you know, we can change policies, but until we change peoples' hearts and we change the narrative and we create a community people want to be a part of, none of the policy in the world is going to make any difference. And I think that what we're seeing now in this national crisis is a real deliberate and shameful policy failure that led to mass incarceration. And I believe that art is what is going to get us out of it. Because it's going to make people care and make people believe that there is no one that they would allow to be treated the way that we allow people to be treated in this country. And until we acknowledge that it did come from slavery, that we were trained in antiblack racism, we were trained in violence. And that's how we approach everything we do in

this country. Until that narrative changes, we're not going to end mass incarceration, because it's the same thing.

[applause]

AGNES GUND: Good.

[applause]

MARIA HINOJOSA: I think it's quite beautiful, Aggie, and I just want to say thank you for showing us your heart. And I think that ultimately that's what we're talking about. It's about justice, but in order to get to the justice part, you gotta feel. Aggie and Catherine Gund are examples of both, incredible art and capacity to feel.

[applause]

[New gospel of wealth. What does #GenerosityToJustice look like to you? Ford Foundation dot org forward slash new gospel.]

End of transcript.