

Artober Fest in Seattle

An article in the Oct. 19 *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* quotes a new report from the U.S. Department of Commerce stating that the amount of money Americans have spent on the performing arts has doubled since 1982. By comparison, spending for sports and movies has stayed about the same. As the article asserted, this report “puts some data behind the notion that the arts are not peripheral, but at the center of our national life.” Pacific Northwest Region members didn’t spend a dime to attend the Artober Fest on Oct. 17, sponsored by the Culture Department’s arts division, but it certainly proved the notion that the arts division is not at the periphery of our practice but at the core, that it supports all that inspires people from within. More than 300 members and guests attended, and the Seattle Culture Center rocked with the joy of quality performance. Yes, art is important for all of us, and it showed. Leo Tolstoy writes in his essay “What Is Art?” that “the task of art is enormous.... Art should cause violence to be set aside. And it is only art that can accomplish this.” The members succeeded brilliantly at this enormous task and are looking forward to doing it again next year.

— ALLANA BOURNE

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