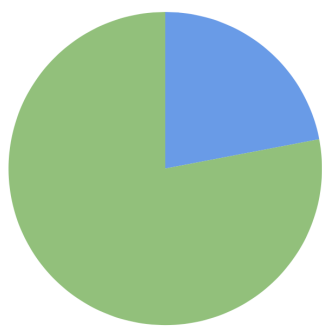


What's Your Opinion?

Does art need to be "good" to be considered art?
 Out of 50 responses:
 Yes -- 11
 No -- 39



• Yes • No

Next Poll:

Value of AI

Do you think the pros of AI outweigh the cons?

Students can answer the poll on The Herald's Instagram page, [@astateherald](#). Instagram polls are posted on Mondays. Previous poll results can be found on [astatetheherald.com](#). Have an idea for a poll? Send your ideas to heraldopinion1921@gmail.com.

These and future articles can be found on the Opinion section of The Herald's website.

Unionize your workplace now

ELIJAH TEMPLETON
 OPINION EDITOR



Elijah Templeton is a junior creative media production major from Jonesboro.

From the Writer's Guild of America (WGA) to the United Auto Workers (UAW) to the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), labor unions have gone on massive strikes this year with tremendous results—and you can too. These strikes received national attention and once again brought up the conversation of union memberships in America. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), union membership in this country has fallen over 10% since the early 1980s, with now only 1 in 10 workers nationwide being union members. This decline in union membership has paralleled the rise in corporate

profits alongside the decline and stagnation of working-class wages. The BLS reports from 1948 to 2013, the average worker's productivity increased by over 240% while wages only increased a little over 100%. Workers are doing more work for less pay. The BLS also reported that from 1980 to 2013, the top 1% saw a 138% wage increase while the bottom 90% saw a mere 15% wage increase. The rich get richer on the backs of worker's labor. These staggering numbers are signs of a much bigger problem in this country that are best saved for their own story. In regard to union membership, however, the numbers support the opinion that it is better to be a union member than not. Among full-time wage and salary workers, union members had median usual weekly earnings of \$1,216 in 2022, while non-union workers had median weekly earnings of \$1,029, a \$10,000 difference over the course of a year. The benefits of union membership cannot be overstated. Having an organization whose sole purpose is to better the situation of its members in the workplace is invaluable to the average working-class American. The WGA, SAG and UAW all went on national strikes this year and each received nearly all of their demands by

the time an agreement was reached with studios and motor companies. The workers withheld their labor and held their executives' feet to the fire for months on end and refused to compromise on their worth. This is a massive time for labor movements in American history. There has not been as much focus on union membership in this country since the boom of unions in the 1950s. If there was ever a time for working-class people to band together in solidarity and demand better pay, working conditions and benefits, it is now. It can seem futile to try and make far-reaching changes that would alter the foundation of this country for the betterment of everyone. This is a daunting task that is not likely to happen anytime soon. What can happen soon though is attempting to unionize your workplace. By standing in solidarity with your coworkers in whatever field you are in, you make yourselves so much stronger. By withholding your labor, you show the true value of that labor and how everything falls apart without you. Imagine if everyone in your workplace decided to not come to work Monday morning. You receive calls and

emails threatening disciplinary action, but you stand unwavering. How many days would it take for your bosses to call you to a meeting with an offer that would get all of you back to work? This is not about greed or unrealistic expectations. The money is there, it just very rarely goes to the workers. Instead, CEOs and higher-ups in companies receive bonuses and wage increases while the workers making the wheel turn are left with scraps. Recognize your worth. Organize in your local community. Strike if your demands are not met. Stand in solidarity with your peers and be the change you would like to see. Change will not happen unless you make it so. But of course, that's just one man's opinion.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF FREEPIK
 Artist rendition of union logo.

There is no such thing as "bad" art

JACK DOUGLAS
 STAFF WRITER



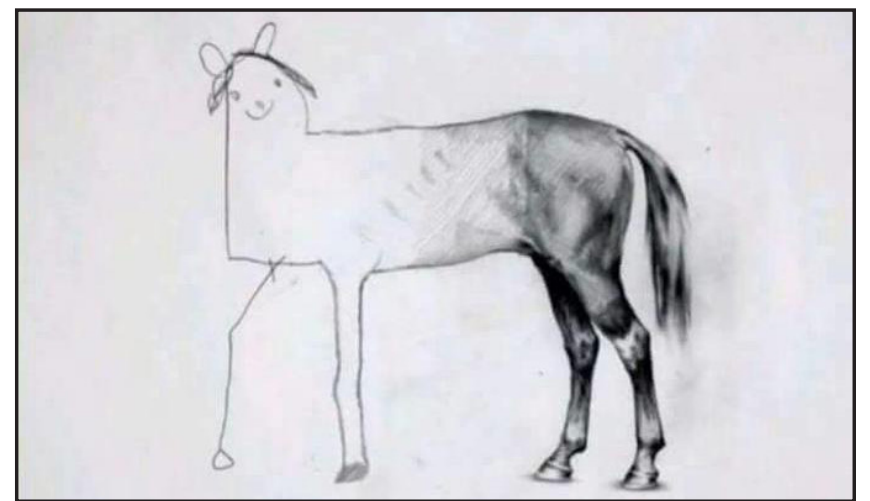
Jack Douglas is a junior multimedia journalism major from Paragould.

Trying to say that art is "good" or "bad" is like saying there is a right way and a wrong way to breathe. Art has been with us for a long time and is an essential part of what makes us human. Some people, especially on the internet, seem to think "good" art is more deserving of recognition and value than "bad" art but then fail to define what "good" art is or how it is meaningfully different from "bad" art. My favorite example of this is X user [@oldbooksguy](#), who posted a list of 15 differences between what he considers to be "good art" and "bad art." Criteria for good art included: "improves mood," "boosts energy" and is "instinctively recognized as art;" while bad art "makes you feel weird," "saps energy" and is

"instinctively recognized as a scam." Obviously, his criteria are based on subjective rather than objective reasons, because there is no such thing as objectively bad art. Many of the distinctions that are often set between "good" and "bad" art are aesthetic qualities rather than artistic values. Michelangelo's "The Creation of Adam," is often cited as an example of "good" art for its beauty, but beauty isn't the only qualification for art. The works of Francisco Goya are undeniably art and yet his most famous "Saturn Devouring His Son," is grotesque and horrifying. Under aesthetic standards, Goya's work fails; it isn't charming or beautiful; it's scary and ugly. Yet it is still considered a great work of art by many. Maybe the difference between the two paintings, and other, less appreciated works of art comes down to the work that was put into the pieces. After all, "good" art typically is viewed as having much more time and effort involved than what is considered "bad" art. A common example of a "bad" work of art is "Comedian," a 2019 piece in which Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan duct-taped a banana to a gallery wall, which then sold for \$120,000. The piece was controversial, to say the least, but

that was the point. Love it or hate it, the audience engaged with the piece and received something from it in one way or another. It didn't matter that the piece was cheap to make, or easy to set up, its value came from the idea, not from its execution. There seems to be a sort of sentiment with some "bad" artworks because they're simple, they automatically have less value than others. Almost like our culture has put such a value on the material and labor costs that we fail to see the value of expression and creativity. Art is nothing without expression; even the greatest masterworks fail without

making an impression on their viewers. In reality, there is no objective difference between "good" art and "bad" art. There is just art. Human creativity and expression are too wonderful to be quantified and there really is no right or wrong way to do it. All artists, musicians and writers create because of something deeply rooted in human nature that transcends the bounds of good or bad and calls us to connect with others through our work. In short, we create because we are human and I think that alone makes all art worthy of value.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF KNOW YOUR MEME
 Artist interpretation of "bad" half and "good" half of a horse drawing.

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Rachel Mooneyham should have been identified as a strategic communications major in the Nov. 8 Edition.