

# Art Critics on 'Art Shaming': Yes, It Exists and Khloe Kardashian Kind of Deserved It

By [Laura Pitcher](#) • 08/14/18 9:55am



Khloe Kardashian accuses her mother of 'art shaming.' E! Entertainment/YouTube

Let it never be said that there's a topic too lofty for the Kardashians to tackle. Last night's episode turned its attention to elitism in the fine arts—sort of. In a conversation between Khloe Kardashian and her “momager,” Kris Jenner, Khloe asks about a Jeff Koons signature balloon animal, unsure of what it is. After Kris tells her with a very pursed pout that she “needs to go to, like, an art class,” Khloe feels hurt and, in her own words, “art shamed.” She chastises her mother for making her feel “less than” for her lack of knowledge, rather than kindly helping

Ben Davis, a national art critic for Artnet News, tends to agree that we should be careful about making everything populist. “We’ve got a reality TV star president who rages against the media elites, so the ‘elitism’ question is actually kind of loaded,” he said.

Davis understands that art circles composed of “just people showing off an expensive education” may be “easy to hate,” and admits that a large percentage of casual art conversation is usually “micro art shaming.” But he is also quick to point out that if “elitist” means “culture that appeals to small groups of people with very specific tastes,” that can actually be a good thing. He personally is a fan of difficult ideas and weird things that not everyone will get.

“One of the best things about art is that it doesn’t have to appeal to everyone,” he said. “Sometimes that kind of work makes you feel dumb at first, or like you don’t ‘get it’. But if you don’t feel like you don’t ‘get it’ sometimes, then you may be rather incurious about others or not terribly self-aware.”

He goes on to compare Khloe feeling art shamed for not knowing about Jeff Koons to a wine snob getting mad at someone for not knowing Yellow Tail. “Lady Gaga has a song about Koons. Koons did stage sets for Jay Z. He gave art lessons to at least one other Kardashian,” he said. “If there is one person she might know if she was paying attention to art at all, it might be Jeff Koons.”

The critics’ verdict on Khloe’s cries of “art shaming” seems to be an abounding “who cares?” Ultimately, the Kardashians may not be shining a light on any revolutionary cultural issue. Davis thinks that “a little shame” is not always a bad thing, and can in fact motivate someone to “check themselves” and ensure they don’t stay ignorant. This piece of advice sounds vaguely familiar to Kris’s own advice, “you need to go to, like, an art class.”

That being said, Davis also reminds us that when it comes to art shaming, it's important to remember who is making you feel that way and why. If Kris Jenner tried to shame him about Jeff Koons, Davis said he would simply "laugh in her face."

Here's the whole article:

<https://observer.com/2018/08/art-shaming-khloe-kardashian-over-jeff-koons-is-fine-art-critics/>