THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ART IN OUR SCHOOLS.

NO WONDER PEOPLE SAY “GESUNDHEIT” WHEN YOU SAY “TCHAIKOVSKY.”

I once wrote to make a quick hit of the world’s favorite composer, despite his relatively recent passing (he’s only been dead for a century). Peter Illich Tchaikovsky would certainly make the list. After all, he composed Swan Lake, which is perhaps the most famous ballet of all time. And there certainly can’t be more than a handful of ballet companies that don’t stage a production of The Nutcracker every Christmas.

And why not? Indeed, this great Romantic composer should be so immortalized. As a young man, he quit a secure government job — a common role at the time — in order to pursue a career in music. His wild temperament combined with his tendency to work too hard led him with terrible insomnia, debilitating headaches and hallucinations. On top of that, Tchaikovsky’s composition teacher never liked his work, even after he became world famous. Satirists such as these could have finished a lesser man. Instead, they informed his work.

Music, as much as it means to me, still Tchaikovsky, inspired a deepening bond, a deeper meaning, a higher purpose, which remains some of the best laid in history. Yet some children still confused Tchaikovsky with a naval captain.

BLESS YOU, MR. T.

No sensible person would ever say that arts education isn’t important to their child’s well-being. Quite the opposite, in fact. When asked, a majority of parents believe the arts are an integral part. They know painting and dance and music and drama help foster analytical thinking, improve overall academic performance, promote a healthy sense of individuality and bolster self-confidence.

Not to mention, of course, the obvious creative outlet they provide young minds.

Given all of this, what responsible parent wouldn’t think it’s a good idea that their kids spend more time waiting in line in the cafeteria each week than they do in arts classes?

IS THIS SWAN LAKE’S SWAN SONG?

If you think the declining standards in schools today are just the price of doing business, then doing nothing. If, on the other hand, you feel this is unacceptable and disadvantageous to your child’s welfare, you need to speak up and demand his or her fair share of the arts. To find one how or for more information about all the benefits of arts education, please visit us on the web at AmericansForTheArts.org.

Or else the kid’s work of Peter Illich Tchaikovsky may end up seeming like just another casualty of an already season.

ART. ASK FOR MORE.

For more information about the importance of arts education, please contact www.AmericansForTheArts.org.