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Art City

An online journal about visual art, the urban landscape and design. Mary Louise Schumacher, the Journal Sentinel's art and architecture critic, leads the discussion and a community of writers contribute to the dialogue.

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Summer art books: '9.5 Theses on Art and Class'

By **Mary Louise Schumacher** of the Journal Sentinel

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As we count the days until our big, summer reading list arrives (in the Cue section of your Sunday paper), I thought I'd recommend a few reads for art lovers.

"9.5 Theses on Art and Class" by New York art critic Ben Davis is far from a light, beach-blanket read. This collection of essays may break your head. But it's a welcome antitoxin to the art world's festering cancers, too.

Drenched in theory but written beautifully and for all of us, Davis' essays dive right into most vexing of art world debates: What does it mean to be an artist? What should an economic infrastructure for art look like? Do politics and art belong together? What is art criticism for?

This book has a high purpose that many attempt and few fulfill. It is a compelling and convincing reminder of why art matters and what's ultimately at stake.

The cover features another compelling art world critique by artist William Powhida. The book is due out from Haymarket Books on July 2.