

MINIMÉRIAL COLONIES

THE MAGAZINE FOR PROFESSIONAL MIGRANT ARTISTS



Pop Art

Sometimes I find
a place to sleep

But I never dream



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While years pass we start thinking more carefully about our life. We also evaluate the quality of these experiences in a life in this harmful world. We become older while problems become more and more; maybe because we could only see clearly the problems we lived in at the moment we lived them. I say that now I see a world with chronicle problems, west/east, Islam/Christianity and Judaism, or poor and rich.

As it seems that there is no solution with these chronicle problems, and as always we are the ones to pay the cost, we are the ones to die, we are the ones to live more and more miserably, and it seems that we have born into this kind of suffering.

As I wrote in my last editorial, we in the EU-MAN, cannot continue working because of a young woman in the Ministry of Culture “the Finnish ministry of culture” who did not know or understood how we could serve our people and our members these last 19 years of our beloved work and we should be under her mercy and her accounts.

This woman, which I asked many times: “please, just let us continue our work”, because we believe that it is necessary for all of us and I was even forced to say “to you too”. We did work for everyone in Europe, we did work and we have been integrated, trying to live normal life, to help ourselves not to be depending on other while we continue to create art.

Especially and exceptionally we did most of our work in the country where I live; and I should say that I helped building a good name for Finland both abroad and inside

the country. And that presenting an exceptional image about Finland, about our life in Finland and all that unfortunately ends like this. Here. Now!

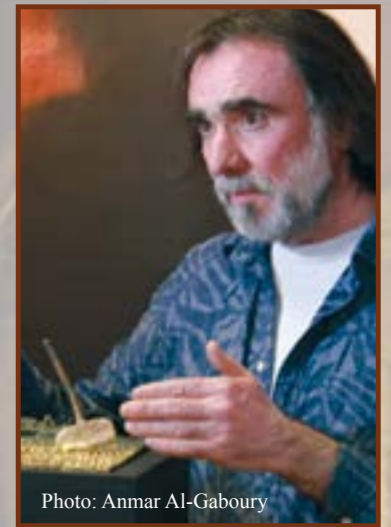


Photo: Anmar Al-Gaboury

We are punished, instead of awarded. We have to stop our work NOW, except the gallery which I do not know if it has any future after our next exhibition after the scheduled exhibition in the beginning of the year, on the 19th anniversary of the establishing the EU-MAN...

We will be direct with our critics, we will point out mistakes we have done and you did not receive well. We will show all our material, creations joined with some of our writings about you. Yes, you the Finns. Because we feel shame to live among you, you let us down aside some of you, marginalised in this society.

We will title our exhibition “And if Finland will celebrate its 100s anniversary we will be 20 years on the whole game, but is it worth to work in this society? Is it worth to do more, I think this is your choice not ours. Because you should know yourselves better than anyone else in this world.”

Amir Khatib

From Floris to Rubens

Till May 15 2016
Royal Museums of
Fine Arts of Belgium

This exhibition features ninety drawings from artists from the southern and northern Netherlands created during the 16th and beginning of the 17th century. Assembled with great care by the collector, these drawings belong to one of the most fascinating and prolific periods in the history of draughtsmanship.

In addition to beautiful sketches for prints, paintings, stained glass and tapestries by great masters such as Frans Floris and Peter Paul Rubens, other sheets like the sublime figure studies of Hendrick Goltzius and Cornelis De Vos or the so accurately detailed landscapes of Pieter Stevens and Adriaen Frans Boudewijns are put in the spotlights. The majority of the selected drawings have never been shown to the public before.



Isa Genzken

Till March 6, 2016
The Stedelijk Museum
Amsterdam

Isa Genzken (1948) is an artist prepared to risk everything in her pursuit of artistic renewal. Her oeuvre is rooted in the medium of sculpture, and is distinguished by a constantly evolving visual language and the unconstrained use of media. Genzken's work encompasses sculpture, installation, film, video, painting, work on paper, collage, and photography. In the 1970s, she produced computer-designed sculpture in relation to American Minimalism and Conceptual Art. These sculptures were followed by one radical step after another.

"I always wanted to have the courage to do totally crazy, impossible, and also wrong things."
(Isa Genzken, 1994)



Social Design

Till December, 2016
Centre for Contemporary Art
Ujazdowski Castle

SOCIAL DESIGN FOR SOCIAL LIVING is a long-term program of collaboration between culture-makers from Indonesia and Poland. Architects, designers and artists work on location with Jatiwangi Art Factory members and the Jatiwangi local community. The goal is to keep the local cultural heritage based on the production of ceramics, on unique values of community-work and contemporary art activities in the West-Javanese town and to establish guidelines for the future. The team consists of the Jatiwangi Art Factory crew that works in collaboration with: Marta Frank – a product- and graphic-designer whose projects are related to cultural and geographic heritages; Robert Kuśmirowski – a visual artist often associating his works with history, memory, site-specific objects, and the relationship between a place and its history; architect Maciej Siuda – who finds solutions to the community-made issues and needs and is the co-author of a school-building project in Haiti, and the curators Marianna Dobkowska and Krzysztof Łukomski.



Demonstrating Minds

Till March 20, 2016
Museum of Contemporary Art
Kiasma - Helsinki

Art can take a stand. It can be a form of resistance and an expression of outrage. It can give a voice to the have-nots and the invisible. This exhibition looks at art and society through the work of 19 contemporary artists and artist groups from around the world. These artists highlight and probe the disputes and friction points that come with living as part of society.

The featured works address universal issues related to labour, economics and the distribution of power. They also touch upon topical themes such as the war in Ukraine, riots and protests, refugeeism and migration. Some works revisit old manifestos and ideologies; others reinterpret meaning-laden images. Another key topic of contention is the role of art and the artist in society.



Max Beckmann and Berlin

Till February 15, 2016
Berlinische Galerie

As the Berlinische Galerie marks its fortieth anniversary, the exhibition "Max Beckmann and Berlin" will focus for the first time attention on the decisive role the city played in the artist's work. The art historian Julius Meier-Graefe, a contemporary of Beckmann's, succinctly summed up the relationship between the artist and the city in 1924: "Max Beckmann is the new Berlin."

Max Beckmann (Leipzig 1884 –1950 New York City) spent two lengthy periods living in Berlin – one from 1904 until 1914, before the First World War, and another from 1933 until 1937, arriving after the National Socialists took power and remaining until he emigrated to Amsterdam. But even in the years between 1915 and 1933, when the artist had moved his principal residence to Frankfurt am Main, he fostered close personal and professional ties with Berlin. He visited the city frequently and maintained his presence in the arts scene of the Weimar Republic through numerous solo and joint exhibitions.



Alexander Calder: Performing Sculpture

Till April 3, 2016
Tate Modern, London

Calder travelled to Paris in the 1920s, having originally trained as an engineer, and by 1931 he had invented the mobile, a term coined by Duchamp to describe Calder's sculptures which moved of their own accord. His dynamic works brought to life the avant-garde's fascination with movement, and brought sculpture into the fourth dimension.

Continuing Tate Modern's acclaimed reassessments of key figures in modernism, Alexander Calder: Performing Sculpture will reveal how motion, performance and theatricality underpinned his practice. It will bring together major works from museums around the world, as well as showcasing his collaborative projects in the fields of film, theatre, music and dance.



Renzo Arbore La mostra

Till April 3, 2016
MACRO, La Pelanda
Rome

Major exhibition dedicated to Renzo Arbore, 50 years of his remarkable career, his television and radio broadcasts that have so strongly marked the history of television and customs of our country, to his friends and to his discoveries, his musical paths and the concerts of the Italian, to his incredible collection of objects and memorabilia, but also to his friends, to his travels, to support non-episodic to Lega del Filo d'Oro and its sensitivity towards the less fortunate, the overwhelming human experience and ultimately to its contribution of intelligence and irony to Italian culture.



Yoko Ono

March 19 till July 10, 2016
MAC Lyon

The whole Museum is dedicated to Yoko Ono's works.

A visual artist, a musician, a video artist and a peace activist, she is one of the inventors of performance art.

From the 50s up to now, Yoko Ono has created an experimental and interactive work, deeply rooted in the everyday life. Her texts and poems, genuine scores, take on every form of the visual culture: live shows, musical pieces, participatory actions, paintings, installations, films... giving a key role to imagination.



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DIAKONIA does not implement or carry out projects on its own. Instead, we support and cooperate with local partner organizations. We often give institutional support, based on our strategy for change and a rights-based approach.

Long-term commitment

The expression 'long-term commitment' may be most important expression to use when describing how Diakonia works. Both we and the change makers in our global network know that it is possible to change the world, but we also know that it takes time and requires tenacity and persistence. The partner organizations we cooperate with normally receive our support over several years.

A driving force for change

"People changing the world" is our motto, with 'people' referring to the poor and oppressed, who, through support from Diakonia and our partners, find ways to transcend poverty and suffering. They are courageous and competent people who turn their anger at injustice into a driving force for change. They know what needs to be changed and how it can be done. Diakonia's task is to help them reach their goals.

Other change makers are the enthusiastic people in Sweden who raise money for Diakonia and arrange debates, seminars and events. They help spread information while playing an important role in the work towards achieving a more just world.

Our goal: a life in dignity

We have a working dialogue with our partner organizations. They know what they need in the location in which or on the level at which they work. It is Diakonia's task to meet these needs and help partner organizations meet their goals. We are able to contribute with funds, capacity building and participation in networks. In short, we want to provide our partners with whatever they need to help people live a dignified life marked by justice and security.

We cooperate with many different types of organiza-

tions. Some work on securing livelihoods in villages or communities, while others work globally to change the structures that cause poverty. The mix of partners provides strength and knowledge. Our partner organizations can also support each other.

Core values

Diakonia has identified six core values to guide us as an organization and as individuals within the organization. These values are firmly rooted in the Christian tradition and our way of interpreting the Christian faith, but are not exclusive to Christianity. We believe that they guide us as we work together with people of different faiths and worldviews. They make us open to all people who show goodwill.

Freedom

Understood in terms of Christian belief, freedom means that no individual, group or power structure has the right to violate the human rights of another individual. Throughout Creation humans were given the freedom to choose between good and evil, and to take responsibility for their choices. From this perspective, Diakonia works for human rights. Each individual has the right to develop according to his or her own capacity without being limited by prejudice, gender inequality or the stereotypical expectations of others.

Thus, we uphold, respect, promote and protect human rights by recognising and appreciating diversity and by treating people equally and equitably.

Solidarity

We have chosen to side with marginalised people living in poverty and work for their right to determine their own lives. All sustainable change takes place through the joint efforts and will of many individuals. The God of Creation is also the God of history, who chose selfless love to bring about change and who works throughout history through people, both individually and collectively. Our belief is that long-term work performed in love and solidarity, with the vision of a just and dignified life for all will, in fact, change the world.

Thus, we believe in using power with integrity and for empowerment. It is crucial to recognise that power relations, whether on a global or local scale, are structured around different hierarchical categories, such as gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion and age. For Diakonia, it is appropriate to consider power within our organization and in our relationships with partners. We promote and safeguard the



right to participation and non-discrimination. We promote good leadership, team spirit and solidarity.

Responsibility

The Christian message indicates both individual and shared responsibility. Each person is responsible for his or her own life, and for that of the community and Creation at large. Democracy is the form of governance that best expresses the fundamental ideals in the Bible regarding the equal worth, rights and obligations of all people. It is therefore our task to work for more widespread democracy, both in the formal sense and in terms of a culture of democratic values that should permeate society at all levels.

Thus, we believe in the equal worth of every individual, and we strive to practice and promote transparency, qualitative participation, inclusion, non-discrimination and accountability.

Righteousness

Underlying the Christian claim for social and economic justice is the belief in God's righteousness. Injustice arouses the anger and sorrow of God. All people should therefore have the right to lead a worthy life, irrespective of economic and social status. Thus, we Diakonia strives to be fair and transparent in all our work.

Hope

In a world torn apart by conflict and injustice, the contribution of the Christian faith is the hope that a better world, the Kingdom of God, is possible and will one day become a reality. Christian hope concerns not only life after death, but also the fulfilment of God's will today. Hope provides motivation and helps people to persevere in a chaotic world. It is a force that is already creating change.

Thus, we inspire and support those working to change unequal and unfair structures.

Peace

Peace is used in the Bible to describe peoples' relationship with God, other people and Creation. Peace involves safeguarding the life of each person, physically and mentally, and preserving Creation. It is our task as Christians to strive for peace for all people on Earth. This is the basis of our work with peace building.

Thus, we believe that peace is a requirement if people are to live dignified lives. ■

Francesco Albano

By: Amir Khatib



FRANCESCO ALBANO is a remarkable artist who managed to find his style through the history of art. He mainly creates extraordinary sculptures, installations and art objects. Albano is working in the era of post-modern art because he uses all possible objects to fulfill his thoughts and create a how close to perfection.



He melts the human body or uses the human body as an object to show unification, or/and he uses the animal body as substitute to human body, an alternative to the situations that inspire him. He also uses furniture, old furniture to make compositions adjoined with human bodies.

His works, as I can see, are full of criticism to the contemporary world, to contemporary life. Albano uses different types and diverse materials to finish his artwork; that does not mean he has not been influenced by the big masters to implement his works, but he also differences, he creates his works the way that suit him.



His scream to audiences is very loud; his works shouted at me when I first. I remember the first work was "the chair", a hanged chair. I immediately felt that I was in front of a master piece. It left me a great impression and had a very big impact on me. Then I saw his name and I knew that the maker of this piece was great thinker.

Albano creations are the result of deep thinking. He experiences the idea and let it for a while mature in his mind. He does not deliver his ideas raw. He waits until the idea is ready to be delivered itself. I have never been to his studio, but I'm sure he works for long without consideration of time or needs; he works the way his instinct leads him.

One of the characteristics that led me to the conclusion that Francisco is a post-modern artist, was his use of idea, yes he



has nothing to do with others but the same time he was inspired by Bacon, the French great artist. I actually do not know why but for some reason his work reminded me of Bacon, although he is very far from Francis Bacon. I suppose that is why I see some kind of relationship between him and Bacon.

And of course the use of a variety of materials, which I do not consider it a remark of postmodern art. But as mentioned in art history, I should say that too.

His work with wood is absolutely fantastic and fascinating. He works carefully and slowly towards completing his piece, unlikely those handcraft artists who work professionally though fast ignoring small mistakes and inspiration. Albano works with confidence and vision with the piece he wants to produce. ■



POP IS ART



POP ART IS NOW MOST ASSOCIATED with the work of New York artists of the early 1960s such as Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, James Rosenquist, and Claes Oldenburg, but artists who drew on popular imagery were part of an international phenomenon in various cities from the mid-1950s onwards. Following the popularity of the Abstract Expressionists, Pop's reintroduction of identifiable imagery (drawn from mass media and popular culture) was a major shift for the direction of modernism. The subject matter became far from traditional "high art" themes of morality, mythology, and classic history; rather, Pop artists celebrated commonplace objects and people of everyday life, in this way seeking to elevate popular culture to the level of fine art. Perhaps owing to the incorporation of commercial images, Pop art has become one of the most recognizable styles of modern art.

Key Ideas

By creating paintings or sculptures of mass culture objects and media stars, the Pop art movement aimed to blur the boundaries between "high" art and "low" culture. The concept that there is

no hierarchy of culture and that art may borrow from any source has been one of the most influential characteristics of Pop art.

It could be argued that the Abstract Expressionists searched for trauma in the soul, while Pop artists searched for traces of the same trauma in the mediated world of advertising, cartoons, and popular imagery at large. But it is perhaps more precise to say that Pop artists were the first to recognize that there is no unmediated access to anything, be it the soul, the natural world, or the built environment. Pop artists believed everything is inter-connected, and therefore sought to make those connections literal in their artwork.

Although Pop art encompasses a wide variety of work with very different attitudes and postures, much of it is somewhat emotionally removed. In contrast to the “hot” expression of the gestural abstraction that preceded it, Pop art is generally “coolly” ambivalent. Whether this suggests an acceptance of the popular world or a shocked withdrawal, has been the subject of much debate.

Pop artists seemingly embraced the post-WWII manufacturing and media boom. Some critics have cited the Pop art choice of imagery as an enthusiastic endorsement of the capitalist market and the goods it circulated, while others have noted an element of cultural critique in the Pop artists’ elevation of the everyday to high art: tying the commodity status of the goods represented to the status of the art object itself, emphasizing art’s place as, at base, a commodity.

The majority of Pop artists began their careers in commercial art: Andy Warhol was a highly successful magazine illustrator and graphic designer; Ed Ruscha was also a graphic designer, and James Rosenquist started his career as a billboard painter. Their background in the commercial art world trained them in the visual vocabulary of mass culture as well as the techniques to seamlessly merge the realms of high art and popular culture.

In 1952, a gathering of artists in London calling themselves the Independent Group began meeting regularly to discuss topics such as mass culture’s place in fine art, the found object, and science and technology. Members included Edouardo Paolozzi, Richard Hamilton, architects Alison and Peter Smithson, and critics Lawrence Alloway and Reyner Banham. Britain in the early 1950s was still emerging from the austerity of the post-war years, and its citizens were ambivalent about American popular culture. While the group was suspicious of its commercial character, they were enthusiastic about the rich world pop culture seemed to promise for the future. The imagery they discussed at length included that found in Western movies, science fiction, comic books, billboards, automobile design, and rock and roll music.

The actual term “Pop art” has several possible origins: the first use of the term in writing has been attributed to both Lawrence Alloway and Alison and Peter Smithson, and alternately to Richard Hamilton, who defined Pop in a letter, while the first artwork to incorporate the word “Pop” was produced by Paolozzi. His collage *I Was a Rich Man’s Plaything* (1947)



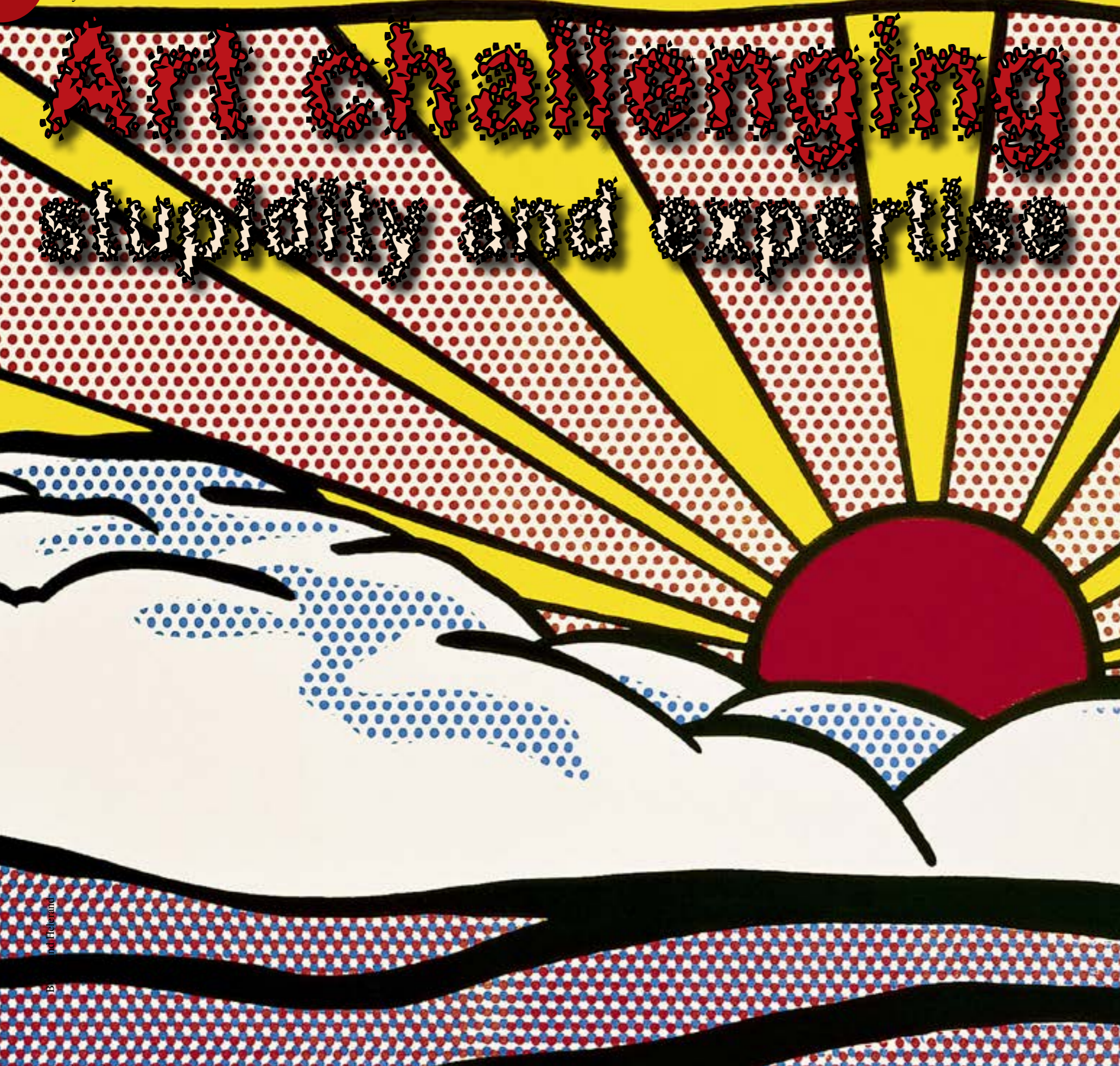
contained cut-up images of a pinup girl, Coca-Cola logo, cherry pie, World War II fighter plane, and a man’s hand holding a pistol, out of which burst the world “POP!” in a puffy white cloud.

By the mid 1950s, the artists working in New York City faced a critical juncture in modern art: following the Abstract Expressionists or rebel against the strict formalism advocated by many schools of modernism. By this time, Jasper Johns was already troubling conventions with abstract paintings that included references to: “things the mind already knows” - targets, flags, handprints, letters, and numbers. Meanwhile, Robert Rauschenberg’s “combines” incorporated found objects and images, with more traditional materials like oil paint. Similarly, Allan Kaprow’s “Happenings” and the Fluxus movements chose to incorporate aspects from the surrounding world into their art. These artists, along with others, later became grouped in the movement known as Neo-Dada. The now classic New York Pop art of Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, James Rosenquist, and Andy Warhol emerged in the 1960 in the footsteps of the Neo-Dadaists.

Once the transition from the found-object constructions of the Neo-Dada artists to the Pop movement was complete, there was widespread interest on the part of artists in the incorporation of popular culture into their work. Although artists in the Independent Group in London initiated the use of “pop” in reference to art, American artists soon followed suit and incorporated popular culture into their artwork as well. Although the individual styles vary widely, all of the artists maintain a commonality in their choice of popular culture imagery as their fundamental subject. Shortly after American Pop art arrived on the art world scene, mainland European variants developed in the Capitalist Realist movement in Germany and the Nouveau Réalisme movement in France.

Roy Lichtenstein proved that he could fulfill demands for a “great” composition even though his subject matter derived from comic books. In addition to using the imagery from these mass-produced picture books, Lichtenstein appropriated the techniques used to create the images in comic books to create his paintings. He not only adopted the same bright colors and clear outlines as popular art, his most innovative contribution was his use of Ben-Day dots: small dots used to render color in mass-manufactured comics. Focusing on a single panel within a comic strip, Lichtenstein’s canvases are not an exact facsimile, but are rather the artist’s creative re-imagining of the composition in which elements may have been added or eliminated, scale could shift, and text might be edited. By hand-painting the usually machine-generated dots, and recreating comic book scenes, Lichtenstein blurred the distinction between mass reproduction and high art. ■

By: Thanos Kalamidas



POP ART IS INSULTINGLY, PROVOCATIVELY, mirroring contemporary consuming society rebelling against the conservatism that wanted art to obey in forms and attitudes. Actually it is and was one of those rare forms of art where words established first the picture before the picture tried to explain the thousands words. Ironically the result in canvas, sculpture or performing arts came as a consequence of the thousands of words that analysed what was happening.

Pop art is not limited in the dimensions of an art piece but it needs a multi-dimensional layer of thoughts and ideas to start understanding and a can of soup could never stand on its own without the philosophical background. So Pop Art is not about techniques, schools or forms but about theorizing and all that in a world where aesthetics rule. Fascinating principal.

I think the best part of the irony is that pop art also managed to become fashion, lead fashion even create fashion. It actually reached every day consuming life, the red-necks kingdom through soup cans and toilet paper. It was somehow the ultimate revenge of art to the everyday life. A provocation and a laugh in the back. Challenging stupidity and expertise.

And by expanding in all forms of expression, Pop Art managed to create vibrations. The Factory in New York became the place of art evolution and revolution. Andy Warhol was just one of the conductors in a hall where Lou Reed met drugs and sex met Grace Jones and the recently deceased David Bowie, Mick Jagger. It was Rock & Roll all around and in the middle was WOW and BANG and Marilyn dead and alive the same time.

This didn't stop in 1960s or 1970s, there was no fashion more contemporary and art more classic. Pop Art stormed into the 21st century establishing new forms of expansion through cinema and literature. Would Tarantino exist without Pop Art? You see gradually Pop Art created as many schools there are in art in general all on her own. Surrealism entered Pop Art and became part of it, the same time Science-Fiction and fantasy embraced Pop Art. Sex Pistols singing Samuel Beckett with a colourful queen in dirty T-shirts.

China had long entered a very twisted and ruthless capitalism but the Chinese comrades had it for secret among them. Till the Pop Art revolution reached China in the end of the 20th century and the Chinese comrades lost their artistic comradeship. It was the day Pop Art had gone beyond the red stars and it was becoming politics. Andy Warhol's Mao spitting in the face of the party. I think that was the most glorious moment of Pop Art as a philosophy. It was the moment where everybody had turned into Pop and Art was is insulting provocatively everybody.

Pop Art is not just a form of Art is humanity and society and if you cannot see that you cannot understand what the fuss is about. The rest is just like a superman comic and a condom packaging. Both always practically, comfortingly artistically insulting society.

Pop Art & I

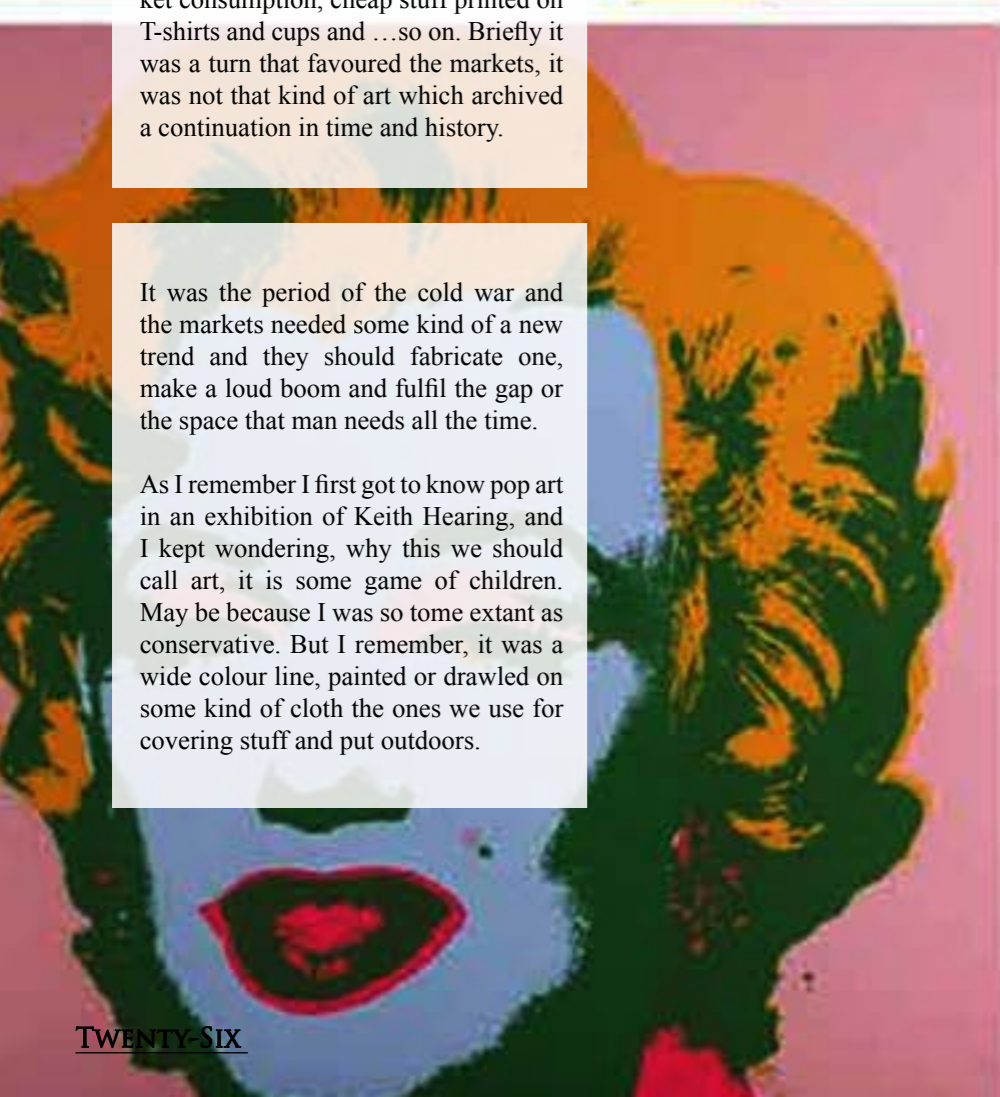
By: Amir Khatib

POP MEANS public, means popular, means that type of art which spreads around everywhere in mankind's life. That's what pop art means for me. A phenomenon that started in the UK and then turned to be led by USA in mid-1950s.

Some people believe that it still exists; I do not, because it has turned into a market consumption, cheap stuff printed on T-shirts and cups and ...so on. Briefly it was a turn that favoured the markets, it was not that kind of art which archived a continuation in time and history.

It was the period of the cold war and the markets needed some kind of a new trend and they should fabricate one, make a loud boom and fulfil the gap or the space that man needs all the time.

As I remember I first got to know pop art in an exhibition of Keith Haring, and I kept wondering, why this we should call art, it is some game of children. Maybe because I was so some extent as conservative. But I remember, it was a wide colour line, painted or drawled on some kind of cloth the ones we use for covering stuff and put outdoors.





Then I was introduced to Andy Warhol, whom I did not like at all. He plays with repeating the same picture again and again on different colours and that only to sell. Maybe his relationships and his friendships made him see things like that, I thought after I watching a documentary film about him.

He had a big house and had a lot of friends, and he did not work his artworks by his hand but there were always others to make the screen work or anything else he needed, exactly like the American pop artist who is popular at the moment, Jeff Koons whom I met in Helsinki when he had an exhibition in Helsinki Art Museum.

Pop art is not art at all, because it lacking the simplest rolls of what to is to be an art, it is simply like my little daughter make some sketch on paper or some paints on a canvas. ■

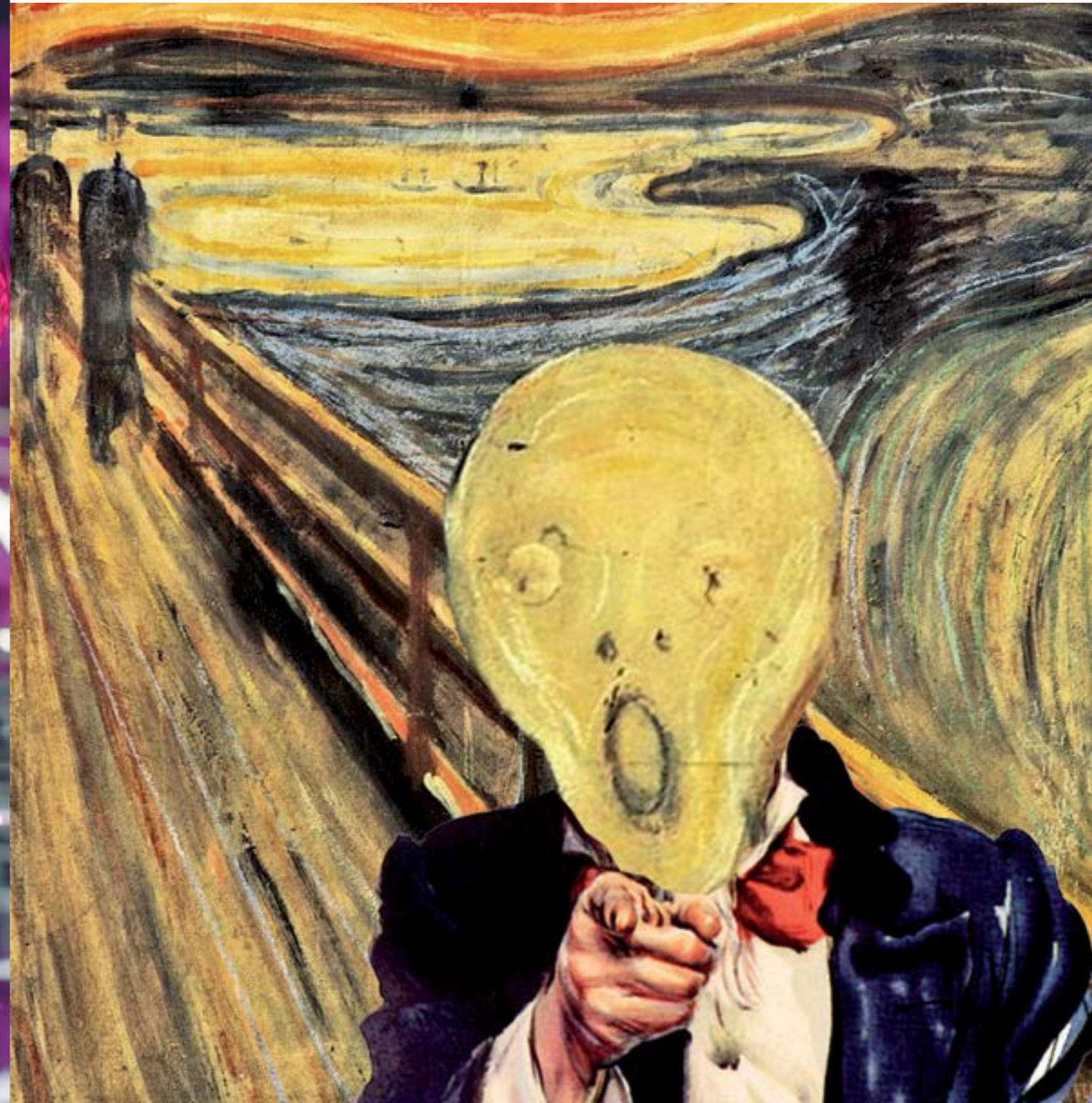


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Shelving Warhol?

By Nabila Pathan

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/life-style/art-and-culture/2014/12/19/Shelving-Warhol-London-gallery-pushes-Eastern-pop-art.html>

POP ART HAS LONG BEEN associated with the names Andy Warhol and David Hockney. Whilst the pop art movement originated in the UK and is often associated with its fixation on American mass culture, its spread to the East is not so well known in the West.

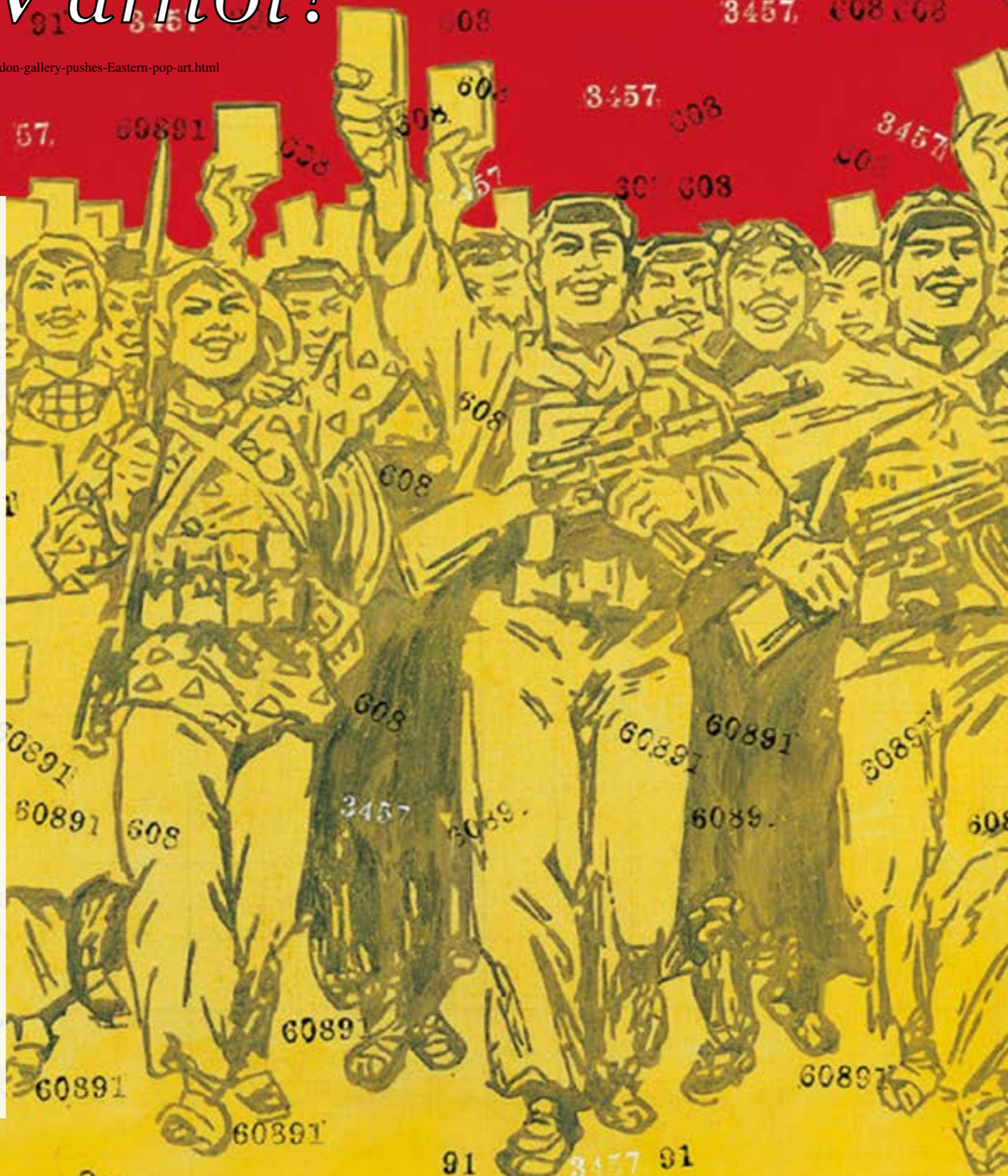
However, a new exhibition at the London-based Saatchi Gallery aims to examine the relationship between Western Pop Art and its lesser-known Eastern counterparts including “Sots Art” in the Soviet Union and “Political-Pop” or “Cynical Realism”, which has flourished in Greater China since the turn of the twenty-first century.

The “Post Pop: East Meets West” exhibition currently on display at the Saatchi Gallery is a celebration of Pop Art’s global reach and legacy. The collection of pop art has been organized by the Tsukanov Family Foundation, an educational charity with an emphasis on promoting Russian and eastern European post-war art. Their collection of Russian Pop art forms a central aspect of the show.

Whilst the exhibition is a showcase of Pop art emerging from four distinct regions of the world (USA, UK, the former Soviet Union and China), the works are presented in relation to each other through the framework of six themes: Habitat; Advertising and Consumerism; Celebrity and Mass Media; Art History; Religion and Ideology; Sex and the Body.

The pop-influenced works span across the past 40 years. According to the Saatchi Gallery, pop art is “widely regarded as the most significant art movement of the last century, ...[it has] exploited identifiable imagery from mass media and everyday life to reflect on the nature of the world we live in.”

“Although from fundamentally different cultures and ideological backgrounds, the artists in this exhibition play with imagery from commercial advertising, propaganda posters, pictures of the famous as well as



monetary and patriotic motifs in wry and provocative works that unmistakably reference the Pop Art movement which emerged in America and Britain in the 1950s and 1960s.”

The familiarity of pop art’s critique of mass culture on British and American society is echoed in the collections from the Western region; Whether it’s Jeff Koons’s basketball sculptures or the pastiches of Warhol paintings by Gavin Turk.

It’s the insight into the unfamiliar, via the art installations from China and Russia which highlight the expansive nature of the pop art movement. According to the Evening Standard, these collections resonate with an “everyday reality... dominated by glorious leaders, hammers and sickles and party propaganda.”

The art installations’ connection to pop art may not be instantly recognizable, but they intrigue and provoke curiosity. According to the Telegraph: “The Pop Art spirit is alive and well, and thriving most in territories where those Pop staples, mass-consumerism and advertising, barely existed until recently: Russia and China.”

Andy Warhol, a leading figure of the Pop art movement once stated: “Once you ‘got’ Pop, you could never see a sign the same way again. And once you thought Pop, you could never see America the same way again”. But through this collection, it’s not just America that is seen and nor is it dominating. ■

By: Katerina Charisi

Pop Art and Life in Fast Forward

FOR US THAT WE ARE BORN DURING THE 80'S and growing up in the 90's, pop art is tightly tied with Betty and Veronica (Archie's girls), comics expressions like "paw", "slurrrp", "blam", Pac-man, Super Mario, the electronic sound of the early pixelated video games, and Madonna's cone bra while singing like a virgin (or something like that- who remembers, anyway?). But what really is Pop Art behind the mix and match, the colors and the wide smiles? I know, I know, Andy Warhol and Pop Art goes together. But be patient.

Having two toddlers in the house that ask about everything and want to know about it all, it gave me the ability (or is it a habit?) to talk (and write) like telling them a bedtime story. So, how about imagining that we fly above mother Earth, in a Zeppelin that like another time machine (yeah, I'm a Back to the Future kid – and till my 20s deeply in love with M.J Fox) will take us back in time and take a look in the past...?

Now, let's see what we got here. We are in the 50's and the world still recovers from another world war. People still mourn, societies try to gather up their pieces and there's a general "silence", one of those silences in deep thoughts, reconsidering and reconstitutions. And somewhere in London, there's a young, stubborn artist with such a loud voice inside him that might dins him, but apparently no one else is listening.

Deciding in remarkable temper and wisdom to take advantage all of this turmoil in his soul- not to break windows and burn cars but- to create, he found fertile ground among other artists and all together gave life to what we call Pop Art. Something that began shyly from Great Britain in the late 50's and spread rapidly in the US and the rest of the world, which in the meantime had fully recovered and started working- bringing us the regeneration of industry and consumerism.

That young man was Richard Hamilton and his definition about Pop Art was: "The project must be popular (for the masses), ephemeral, expendable (forgotten quickly), cheap (for mass-production), new-age (for the youth), funny, sexy, playful, enticing and finally without being less important, commercial and business".

And now I can close this article and we can all get back to sleep. No. Let's see how things evolved in the next years and how Hamilton's Pop Art became a world movement, affecting every part of art; painting, fashion, music, cinema, furniture, photography, even the acting and way of living.

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In 1961 from Russia with love, the first man launches in space, named Yuri Gagarin, while few years later (1969) follows Apollo 11 by Uncle Sam, with Aldrin, Armstrong and Collins walking on the moon and having fun. In 1963 the Vietnam war started and the same year president J.F. Kennedy gets murdered. Only 4 years later Che Guevara dies along with the dream of the romantic rebel who sacrifices himself for a better world. In France erupts the Students Movement in May, 1968, which characterizes the whole 68's generation that indignant by the unfair world challenges the status quo and refuses to be part of it. The pacifist Martin Luther King assassinated. What was I saying? "The world had just recovered from another world war?" Hmmm.

The decades of 60's and 70's were the years of controversy. Women demanded equality in the society and work. Environmentalists and ecologists pushed governments to change their tactics in industry and stop destroying thoughtlessly nature. The young non-con-

formists who lived in groups and often nomadic, the hippies, the flower children, sang for peace and love.

In such a world artists felt they had to redefine their connection with audience and their work itself. In an over-consuming society of thoughtless waste and exhibitionism, pop artists stopped giving much effort in the project's execution and focused on the general idea. Besides, everything seemed to be just an idea; with duration as a thought can last. The permanence of artwork was annulled, everything was ephemera, fast, makeshift and shallow. The material "impoverished" and came from everyday living. It wasn't a matter of commercialization anymore, although pop art invaded every home, every image and sound. It was a matter of ideology.

It was the indirect but clear taunt for the nouveau riche who defined their existence by their material goods, giving up the cultivation of the mind, propounding simple objects/symbols of consumerism as life goals. Characteristic is Hamilton's collage artwork that shows a body builder posing in a modern house, titled "Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?", which was created in 1965. They say that in this particular artwork Hamilton doesn't mean to be neither ironic, nor sarcastic. Now allow me here to disagree with a capitol LOL and come back to "I know, I know, Andy Warhol and Pop Art go together".

Yes, they do go together. But I had to mention Hamilton and that had to be done before Warhol, if I wanted to be fair, although Warhol's success shaded Hamilton. And that's because English pop art culture and American pop art culture have a major difference that has to be mentioned. English pop stands more critically in the means that uses. Hamilton wants his artwork to be full of intima-

tions and his Independent Group with its pioneering exhibition "This Is Tomorrow", follows the same pattern. Hamilton's participation with the collage mentioned above is his most well known artwork and constitutes the first pop art example.

The collage made by mass circulation magazines pictures, represents a naked body builder and a naked woman posing on a couch, having a lamp's hat on her head. In this Hamilton's modern house, the living room is full of emblems of the well, post war life based on the American standards, with the word "POP" in the middle. It is a totally insightful and ironic manifest about an art that invaded everybody's house and lives. (Remember the LOL? That's where it goes).

While Hamilton creates artwork full of hints, irony with humor and sarcasm, the French adopt the more classy term "Neo-Realism" instead of "Pop-Art" and they represent the wave with Arman who scatters wastepaper in galleries, Manzoni who sold his canned breath as "Artist's Breath", Klein who used naked models dipped in paint instead of brushes, Cesar who created unique artworks made by scrap metals collected from car cemeteries and Tinguely that built noisy, self-destructive machines.

All of them in their own special way wanted to show that artists can nominate as art whatever they desire. Period.

One of the most decisive ideas in Pop Art was the abolition of limits between art and life. Artworks must be action, happenings, just like humans experience life. The man who represented this whole new idea of happenings which targets in breaking up the trio "Atelier-Galleries-Museum" that traditionally were the place where art was created, Allan Kaprow establishes the term:

"A happening is a performance, event or situation meant to be considered art, usually as performance art. Happenings occur anywhere and are often multi-disciplinary, with a nonlinear narrative and the active participation of the audience. Key elements of happenings are planned but artists sometimes retain room for improvisation. This new media art aspect to happenings eliminates the boundary between the artwork and its viewer."

So, in Hamilton's Pop culture evinces an ambivalence for Pop and mass media: "When intellectuals deal with mass culture, some might say that they have sold their soul to the devil. But in a perfect culture, the artist adheres to his ideals and gives the best he can, dealing his historical situation with honesty".

The American Pop on the other hand, without any emotionalism or critical intentions and without any limitations, uses indiscriminately Coke's bottles,

soda cans, cigarette packs, postal cards and wrapping papers, ketchup tubes and cars commercials, comic pages, fridges, furniture, even toasters. What emphasized and promotes here is exactly this new over-consumerism and good life. Color, more color, wide smiles and a constant repetition of the new idols, again and again. This can explain and justify the "Americanism". And here comes Andy Warhol.

Whole of Warhol's life was a continuous effort to catch the ultimate pop dream. We was one of the firsts who perceived over consumerism and exhibitionism in the US, the hysteria about fame, the desire for eternal, perfect beauty and the urgent need of having more and more material, pretty things. Instead of judging American vanity, he became its greatest fan and supporter. Through his creations, he reproduced the new trends, the speculations, the exaggeration in appearance and beautiful people (and things). He predicted reality shows, the importance of paparazzi and defined the "15 seconds of fame".

Andy Warhol was brilliant, frenzied, perspicacious, but boring and tiresome, using the repetition of the new idols ("Eight Elvises", "Ten Lizas", "Marilyn Diptych") and highlighted as greatest art the exaggerating, deeply surfaced way of living and production of... Yourself. He was the most charismatic and successful agent of his self. "I love L.A. I love Hollywood. Everything is beautiful; everything is pop; pop is beautiful; everything is plastic. I love plastic. I want to be plastic."

In his silver studio, the "Factory", Warhol became the king of Pop Art and his life along the lives of those who surrounded him turn into an endless party. People flow unstoppably while everyone and everything is allowed; drug addicts, alcoholics, homosexuals, transsexuals, reporters, models and art lovers, rich heirs; all of them parade in the cavern of the Underground, while Warhol, passionately takes pictures of them again and again, using their poses in his activities. Being into all and showing that he doesn't really give a damn about anything at all. The 260 movies that he directed are delusional, fragmented, repetitive, full of beautiful boys and decadent divas.

An artist with such a temperament would never stop to "enough". There is no enough for Warhol. Everything is "much more" and "so much more". At the edge. He left his sign in paintings, photography, sculpture, cinema, music. He became Lou Reed's band manager, while created a pop queen- Bob Dylan's best gal. Addicted in pills, his reaction to what occurred in the "Factory" was something between peeper and Zen detachment. His cynicism, his bleakness and apathy are obvious in his artwork, but in his behavior turn to be scary at times. When a guest of the "Factory" fell off the 5th floor while on LSD, Warhol complained that he could inform him first to film him.



Andy Warhol gets Pop Art in a total new, creepy level. The meanings of ephemeral, pointless, fast, are highlighted and he acts like mocking everything, life itself, the world, the feelings, reminding with his way of living and artwork the self-destructive nature of human beings.

“When I die, I want nothing left behind”, he says and the command “SILENCE” shines in the darkness of the “Electric Chair”, describing in silence the future, warning about the real price of the 15seconds of fame. Whatever he does connects with death and looks like he reflects this passage, having as Acheron his “Factory”, his chair for the boat, and Death... in portraitist’s photo lense. Raw and exaggerated, pop art reflects a dirty truth.

Allusive or not, satirical or promotional, culture or anti-culture, Pop Art was a global movement that reflected perfectly the new aged, industrial, plastic, ephemeral and empty life. For us that we are born during the 80’s and growing up in the 90’s, pop art is color, freedom, collapse of taboos, beautiful things, fast life, and even if this shiny colorful world hid loneliness, depression, self-destruction and death, it managed to disguise elaborately in tones of color and stark plastic till today, showing us what we want to see. Light, colors, beauty. Momentary; Like our lives in fast forward.



TREAT THE
EARTH WELL.
IT WAS NOT
GIVEN TO YOU
BY YOUR
PARENTS,
IT WAS
LOANED
TO YOU
BY YOUR
CHILDREN

HOW WARHOL SAW CHINA'S CHANGING HISTORY

By Kevin Holden Platt

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2014/01/30/arts/the-artist-and-the-chairman-how-warhol-saw-chinas-changing-history/>

ANDY WARHOL STROVE to turn Mao Zedong into a superstar in the West, even as the leader waged a Cultural Revolution across China. While Warhol rocketed to stardom in the 1960s by painting the cultural aristocracy of the Western world, his work took a radical turn in 1972, when he started a sequence of portraits of the Chinese revolutionary.

The artist blew up a photograph contained in Mao's "Little Red Book," transferred the image to an array of canvases, and transformed the leader by applying the same wild, vibrant blocks of paint he had deployed to remake actress Marilyn Monroe.

In these paintings, says Andy Warhol Museum director Eric Shiner, "Mao is as big an international superstar as Marilyn."

Warhol carried around Mao's red book of quotations, which is described, in its preface, as "a spiritual atom bomb of infinite power." He began painting Mao right after U.S. President Richard Nixon flew into Beijing to break a two-decade-long freeze on ties between the two Pacific powers in 1972.

As Warhol remade Mao's image in the West, inside China, which was still hidden behind great walls of isolation, the rebel-emperor Mao continued waging his violent Cultural Revolution, which lasted until 1976. While Western-influenced painters branded as class enemies, such as Lin Fengmian, the French-educated founder of the China Academy of Art, were imprisoned and tortured, "proletarian" artists were conscripted into Mao's campaign to clone himself in stone sculptures and painted portraits that were deployed across China to stand sentinel over its citizenry.

When Warhol made his first trip to China in 1982, he remarked that the country contained only one image — Mao's. "He was smitten with communism — with everyone wearing the same clothes and reading the same books," Shiner says.

While his portraits of Mao as superstar aimed to radically change his image in the West, the Chinese leadership did not welcome these paintings during the 2013 "Andy Warhol: 15 Minutes Eternal" exhibitions in Shanghai and Beijing; rather, Shiner was pressured to pull the Mao works out of these shows.

Shiner said he had no other choice but to comply: "We don't want to be cultural imperialists and say you have to exhibit these paintings." ■

The Powers behind American Pop Art

By J.M. Hammond

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2013/08/28/arts/the-powers-behind-american-pop-art/>

BRASH, BOLD AND UNABASHEDLY low-brow, much of Pop Art took inspiration from the imagery of popular culture to forge what many consider to be the preeminent art form of the mid-20th century.

Starting from the 1960s, art buyers John and Kimiko Powers amassed what has become one of the largest collections of American Pop Art. About 200 pieces from this collection are currently on show at the National Art Center, Tokyo. Although the title, “American Pop Art From the John and Kimiko Powers Collection,” reminds us of its unavoidable U.S.-bias, like any exhibition structured around a single collection, the show runs the risk of presenting a distorted image of its subject. Visitors will have to remind themselves of the fact Pop Art was flowering in Britain before it did in the United States, and of the considerable connections and shared ideas across the Atlantic that subsequently developed.

The Powers adorned their Colorado home with the choicest selections of works by their Pop artist friends, not least of whom was Andy Warhol. His mass-produced silkscreen prints typify the Pop Art aesthetic and mark the distance American art had traveled from the physicality, and perceived elitism, of Abstract Expressionism — the style that had reigned supreme over the previous few decades.

But Pop Art in America needed to take some leaps before it got to that point, and the exhibition traces the movement’s tentative early steps with a section each on Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, two artists often considered to be associated, but not fully aligned, with the movement. Rauschenberg’s “combines” (from the mid-1950s) fuse the rugged, painterly brushstrokes of the abstract expressionists with a return to an interest in images of, and even physical objects from, the real world. Many of the artist’s works here reference two key tropes of American culture — sports and violence — as in his use of stills from the film “Bonnie and Clyde” in a series of lithographs and silkscreens from 1967-1968.

A number of works by Johns use numbers, flags and targets, foregoing the traditional rendering of the three-dimensional world onto the flat surface of the painting, while at the same time moving on from pure abstraction. White Alphabets “A-Z” (1968) catches much of this ambiguity: Up-close you can read the alphabetic characters stamped with print type into the fresh all-white pigment, but if you look from further back, the canvas dissolves into indecipherable patterns or abstract ripples of textured paint.

Further differentiating Pop Art is its sidelining of oil and canvas in favor of a range of unorthodox, often industrial, materials. This is highlighted in a room dedicated to Jim Dine and Larry Rivers, two artists on the fringe of Pop Art, where Rivers’ 1964 representation of Dine behind a storm window forces painting into the three dimensional. Johns also ventures into mixed-media collage

and Rauschenberg prints images onto transparent plexiglass, while Claes Olden-berg uses vinyl and foam for his “soft sculptures.” His drooping “Giant Soft Drum Set” (1967) reflects the mentoring role the Powers had with the artists whose work they collected — it was made in Colorado, inspired by the region’s mountain range, while Oldenberg was taking part in the Artist in Residency program set up by John Powers.

This relationship between patron and artist is explored further in the section “Artists as Friends”, in which works commissioned by the Powers or gifted to them on special occasions — such as a small print by Warhol of a shadow sprinkled with diamond dust — are displayed alongside posters for several exhibitions and events organized by the Powers.

The room in the exhibition with the most impact is no doubt that dedicated to the Powers’ collected works by Warhol. His famous “Campbell’s Soup Cans” come in a variety of configurations: his huge panel from 1962 of 200 small cans (the first time for it to be shown in Japan), and a set of 10 larger ones. Also lined up in rows, as if on supermarket shelves, are “Marilyns” in a pack of 10, along with 10 electric chairs, 10 flowers and 10 “Chairman Maos” — all endlessly replicable, marketable and bankable.

The section on Roy Lichtenstein does a good job of introducing lesser-known works from his career and of showing how, unlike many other Pop artists, Lichtenstein did not turn his back on fine art. His picture of a girl looking in a mirror echoes the genre of vanitas pictures going back hundreds of years, and his take on Monet’s impressions of Rouen Cathedral re-engages with the history of art and representation, utilizing his signature Ben-Day dot idea taken from comic books. Neither does the section fail to feature a number of his well-known paintings in this style, including those of the types of explosions (“Crak!,” 1964) portrayed in war-themed comics.

The exhibition ends, though, with less of a “Varoom!” than a bit of a fizzle, with some less interesting works by affiliated artists, although Tom Wesselman’s female figure studies restore some of the balance, encapsulating much of the particular taste of Pop Art in America that the exhibition intends to convey. ■

The Significance of Pop Art on Society's Portrayal and Opinions of Women

By Claudia Federico

<http://claudiaillustrated.blogspot.se/2012/11/an-essay-significance-of-pop-art-on.html>

FEMALE IDENTITY HAS BEEN A CONTROVERSIAL issue for many years; artists from many movements have protested against or created and pushed forward feminist art. Judy Chicago is one of the most famous examples of a female artist that has dedicated many years to not becoming "the object of male gaze". She created *The Dinner Party*, a monumental, multimedia piece to revive and refresh the history of women. My focus and considerations in this essay are not so much for the defence created by feminists but the art and imagery that caused this backlash, in particular within the Pop Art movement.

"Pop Art" is the term used to describe an influential cultural movement in the sixties, immediately the word conjures up bright colours, sarcastic statements and stereotypes in my mind. A woman who made a bold and continuous appearance throughout Pop Art was Marilyn Monroe who was not only transformed from woman to object but from object to theme. Marilyn's suicide in 1962 however made a statement that put all the statements artists had made about her to shame. It stands as solid evidence for feminists that a life dictated by male desires is not something women should choose let alone be forced into and trapped in.

Andy Warhol took an in depth interest in Marilyn Monroe, his series *The Twenty-Five Marilyns* produced in 1962 (after her death) hold a lot of meaning and emotion, reflecting primarily that Monroe was a star, forced to reproduce herself to an imposed standard that became an inescapable mask. For this particular series Warhol uses only black ink for the print, conveying just how symbolic her mask became not even needed tints of colour to be recognisable. Another feature of this piece is that Warhol has allowed the prints to remain faded in the first two rows of prints and more significantly in the last row of prints. This is possibly a representation of her life, at the beginning just building up her mask, during her years of stardom and beauty (shown by the middle rows) the mask is bold and rich then the last rows, the cracks begin to show and the mask isn't as strong as it once was. Marilyn's success and popularity grew much larger than could

have been predicted after her death; this was primarily due to her presence in Pop Art, the most exciting and fast-moving art of the period. Peter Philip's response to Monroe is instantly recognisable as a reference to her as a sex object for men, because of her portrayals by artists in the movement she will never be able to escape the 'dumb blonde' image she desperately wanted to be free from.

Mel Ramos was a Pop artist born in 1935; Ramos used the nude, female body as the main feature of his paintings and prints from 1964 until 1971, he exploited women continuously, portraying them as the 'sex object' stereotype that had been created for them by pinups in magazines. Ramos's work highlighted to the art world the reality of how male-dominated and sexist the media had become; by introducing the pinup to high art he made a bold statement about how objectified women had become. In the majority of his pieces the idealised women is actually interacting with an object for example in *Micronite Mary* which portrays a nude female amongst two life-size cigarette packets. This particular painting suggests that women are like cigarettes or on the same level in terms of value as them; it suggests they can be bought or borrowed easily, used for measurable pleasure then can be tossed aside when they're finished. I don't believe this is the actual opinion Mel Ramos holds about women, he is more interested in expressing the figure as it was used in the popular imagery at the time, which is the basics of Pop Art anyway. I formed this opinion not from any artwork by Ramos but during my research into him as an individual, his artwork in fact suggests that he is fascinated by the 'guilty pleasure' that pinups provide and wanted to expose this but in an interview he stated "I'm only interested in the figure as symbolism". He evolves this point further and proves his awareness of the society he lives in, within the interview; he explains "I've only used the figure in my work as iconography, that is to say, as depictions of contemporary iconography. If you look around at the media, the figure is used in a myriad of ways for various purposes, advertising, in the form of billboards or on TV, magazines, you know, all around the American landscape". As an artist Ramos was very skilled and took all areas of his work very seriously, each composition

was treated very differently to the pinups plastered around the ‘American landscape’. Micronite Mary is an example of Ramos’s art that depicts how he typically dealt with space as a formal element, by working on a large scale and with photographs he is able to capture 3D shapes that look both real and fake in their 2D state. The colour palette he uses is fairly restricted but complementary so that the warm tones allow the eye to rest easily on the piece, focusing the viewer’s attention on the figures in the piece not the colours he used to illustrate them. In the interview with Mel Ramos, the subject of painting women as ‘inhuman’ arises and he retorts saying, “I tend to get the most flack from women who have flaws, who as I see it have visual flaws. Women who have, as I said, no flaws seem to enjoy my work.” This quote alone is enough evidence that Ramos is ignorant to the fact that he is portraying women with bodies that are impossible to achieve and reinforcing the expectation for women to look like this. Ramos has taken numerous photos of top models using careful lighting techniques to erase flaws and worked with many air-brushed images during the production of his art. It is not that the flawed envy the objectification or fakery it is that every woman (and man) is flawed.

Having evaluated how artists in Pop Art have portrayed woman to be sexual objects, it is important to look at other portrayals of them, Richard Hamilton, Joseph Beuys and Roy Lichtenstein all represented different female stereotypes in their art. Richard Hamilton for example produced a piece titled She which he released in 1961, within his painting he included cut-outs from magazines and depicted that women are part of the house equal and connected to appliances. The painting is currently at the Tate gallery and I have seen it during my research. It caught my attention because in it Hamilton evolves the housewife stereotype. He uses appliances from the kitchen in the piece, a fridge and a toaster are most obvious, he was also aware that almost insignificant eye contact and very significant breasts were essential in the male portrayal of a ‘she’. Hamilton is an important artist to evaluate in this essay because he too produced art based on Marilyn Monroe after Warhol, his piece My Marilyn is a paste-up made in 1964 that displays not only his incredible skill with composition but also proves what an influential effect Warhol’s work was having at the time on other artists in the movement.

Joseph Beuys is an artist working around rather than directly within the Pop Art movement, the piece I chose to analyse is also in the Tate gallery, it is titled White Woman in the Grass and was painted in 1954 using pencil and watercolour. Beuys is immediately connecting the piece to the environment with his colour choice of a light green that has earthy and natural connotations; also in his choice to use watercolour, the watery element of the piece captures a relaxed and free feeling. Using line skilfully Beuys is portraying women as delicate and, by not identifying her with many features, as indistinctive; both



contributing to a stereotype held by many men, that women are beautiful, frail and ordinary, the stereotype that meant women could not do certain jobs or tasks. The stereotype that many feminists fight against even in today’s society.

The final stereotype it is necessary to mention and discuss is captured perfectly by Lichtenstein who had a massive impact on Pop Art and is still famous for numerous works of art. Lichtenstein created his famous piece Drowning Girl by selecting and cropping the image from a 1962 D.C. Comics book titled Secret Hearts. He also altered the text so the viewer can interpret the piece easily without seeing the actual magazine; by hand he began to create the painting, preferring this because it was more personal than the conventional way of commercial printing. Drowning Girl portrays the ‘damsel in distress’ stereotype, like the majority of women in Lichtenstein’s art, she is emotional and the marks and shapes Lichtenstein selects for the piece have been linked to sex and some of its associated feelings. In his pictures Lichtenstein aims to ‘de-individualize and objectivize’ emotions and gestures so that they require effort to connect to emotionally and have a mechanical element to them. Because the men and women in his art are based directly on characters in war comics the men have strong personalities that are very influential in the storyline such as heroes, villains or fighters. The women on the other hand are only present for appearances really, their speech and thought is quite insignificant and dull. Drowning Girl is fundamentally telling its audience that women are irrational, choosing to die rather than ask ‘Brad’ for help, many people wouldn’t even question the piece’s message, I think many feminists would be against the release of such art.

This essay has provided detailed evidence and analysis to prove Pop Art was significant in the portrayal of woman across art history. Ramos, Lichtenstein and Warhol are known as leading artists behind the movement and each had their share of exploiting women within their art as has been discussed. It has been noted that the whole movement was not based on these feminist issues but it was more of an influential theme that gave society a reality check on how passive it was being to popular imagery that was manipulative and offensive. ■



Kurt Schwitters, inspiration of Pop Art

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/art-features/9810512/Kurt-Schwitters-inspiration-of-Pop-Art.html>

ON AUGUST 15 1946, the German artist Kurt Schwitters sold two paintings at the Ambleside Flower Show. “The money wasn’t much,” he wrote to his son. “But at least people now know I can paint flowers.”

Schwitters was a key figure in the interwar European avant garde, a pioneer of collage and concrete poetry, associate of the Constructivists and the Dadaists, who set out to destroy conventional notions of art, and one of the great progenitors of Pop Art. He was about the last person you’d expect to find selling flower paintings in a small town in the Lake District.

But having fled Hitler’s Germany in 1937, Schwitters was now living in Ambleside, stateless and virtually penniless, reliant on donations from more affluent friends and funds raised by selling portraits and landscape paintings to the local townspeople and farmers, who regarded him, at best, as odd.

Yet Schwitters wasn’t entirely out of touch with the international art world. In June 1947, he received a cheque for \$1,000 from the Museum of Modern Art in New York, to be spent on recreating his great pre-war work, a vast house-filling installation in his home city Hannover, which he called *The Merzbau*. Schwitters’s intention was to rebuild this great *gesamtkunstwerk* – total work of art – in a barn, half hidden in the woods near Elterwater.

I’m standing now in what remains of this structure, the Merz Barn – not so much a barn, more a tumbledown drystone shed. Rain drips in through the corrugated plastic roof, which is badly in need of repair. The work Schwitters managed to complete here before his death in 1948 has long since been removed. Yet once you know the history of the place a spirit of defiant and resilient creativity prevails here, a spirit that has inspired generations of artists who have wended their way to this remote spot, and which informs a major new exhibition at Tate Britain, devoted to the embattled final years of this still controversial artist.

If Schwitters is now established as one of the 20th-century greats, he is nevertheless a peculiarly difficult figure to pin down. He is hailed as the godfather of everything from Happenings and Fluxus to performance art, conceptual art and multimedia art, claimed as a central influence by artists of the stature of Robert Rauschenberg, Damien Hirst and Ed Ruscha. A big, ebullient and hugely eccentric character who was known to bark himself to sleep at night like a dog – a designer, performance poet and stand-up comedian as much as an artist – Schwitters doesn’t quite fit with any of the es-

established currents of 20th-century art. Was he a kind of Holy Fool of Modernism, a genuine outsider in a world of poseur-outsiders, whose influence on subsequent art was more or less accidental? Or was he a shrewd operator who acted out his life as an aspect of his art in a way that has now become almost commonplace, but was then little understood?

“He was involved with many movements and groups, but he was always slightly out on a limb,” says Karin Orchard, curator at Hannover’s Sprengel Museum, which houses the largest collection of Schwitters’s work. “Before he left Germany he was always based in Hannover. His deconstruction of language and use of found materials was challenging to people here, but he was proud of his association with the city.”

Born in 1887 into a well-off middle-class family, Schwitters decided early on on a career in art, though his first works were painfully conventional. He studied at the esteemed Dresden Academy alongside George Grosz and Otto Dix, later famous for their scabrous depictions of Weimar Germany, but he seems to have been unaware of them and indeed of *die Brücke*, the radical Expressionist group then active in the city. It took the First World War, in which he served as a draftsman, to break him out of his narrow, cosy, provincial shell.

“Things were in terrible turmoil,” he later wrote. “What I had learnt at the academy was of no use. Everything had broken down and new things had to be made out of the fragments.”

As if to make up for lost time, Schwitters, who was already 30, went through every extant Modernist style – Post-Impressionism, cubism, Futurism, Expressionism – in the course of a year. He exhibited at the influential Berlin gallery *Der Sturm*, but his attempts to join the city’s Dadaist group were rebuffed. With the city in political chaos, Schwitters, in receipt of a private allowance and absorbed in his own aesthetic preoccupations – not quite Dadaist and not quite Expressionist – was an anomalous figure.

Schwitters responded by starting his own movement, a movement of one he called Merz, from a fragment of the stationery of the Commerz Bank that appeared in one of his early collages. Everything he now did, whether painting, sculpture, abstraction, representation, poetry, sound art or design, he now grouped under the term Merz.

“Merz is about the total breakdown of inhibition,” wrote Schwitters. “It means creating relationships between everything in the world.”

Collage had been pioneered by Picasso and his fellow cubists early in the century. But Schwitters’s approach was more all-embracing than anything that had gone before. For him there was no substance that was off limits to art. His wife recalled having to wait for him in the



street one night as he began to create a collage on the pavement from cigarette ends and other detritus.

Yet where Dadaist collagists such as Raoul Hausmann and Hannah Höch employed lowly materials principally to outrage respectable opinion, Schwitters's concerns were almost exclusively aesthetic. "He was interested in the balance of colours, forms and shapes," says Orchard. "He never wanted to offend anyone."

In 1923, he began his great work, *The Merzbau* – or *Merz Building* – an explosive agglomeration of found and constructed materials covering the walls of his family home in a leafy Hannover suburb. Generally considered the first example of installation art, it expanded to fill six rooms, penetrating between the various floors of the house.

Mad as this may sound, Schwitters was far from being an isolated crank. He exhibited and performed all over Germany with Modernist luminaries such as László Moholy-Nagy, Theo van Doesburg and Tristan Tzara. If the burghers of Hannover regarded him as eccentric, with his performances of sound poetry – such as the *Ursonate*, 45 minutes of completely abstract vocalising – he was generally well-liked, and developed a small graphic design business working for the city council.

All that changed with the Nazi accession to power in 1933. Schwitters's work featured prominently in the Nazis' anti-Modernist "Degenerate Art" show. The best-known photograph of the exhibition shows Hitler laughing at one of Schwitters's works.

Wanted for an "interview" with the Gestapo, Schwitters fled to Norway, where he had a holiday home, in 1937. On the country's annexation by Germany in 1940, he took the last boat out, arriving in Scotland, carrying little luggage, but with a white mouse in each pocket. Interned as an enemy alien, he eventually found himself in the Hutchinson Camp on the Isle of Man. Crowded into three fenced-off streets of boarding houses in the Manx capital Douglas, the camp's inmates included 32 university professors, various eminent musicians and the chess correspondent of the *New Statesman*.

Regarded as a threat to British security – though almost all were Jews or well known anti-Nazis – this illustrious band set about organising a "university", a rolling programme of lectures to keep their minds active. A typical day's activities covered subjects as diverse as ocular surgery, criminology and Byzantine art. In this benevolent and eccentric environment, Schwitters shone.

"I can see him slouching along the street in a green loden suit," says Freddy Godshaw, who was interned with Schwitters at the age of 17. Now 89, Godshaw still has drawings of himself and his brother that Schwitters did in the camp. "He stopped me in the street and insisted on doing it. It only took him a few minutes. He charged so much for a head, so much for head and shoulders, so much for full-length. But he didn't charge us as he knew our father from Hannover."

Performances of the *Ursonate* were wildly popular. Godshaw still remembers phrases from the epic sound work that became greetings around the camp: "Lanke trrgll," went one, to which the reply was, "Pi pi pi ooka ooka zueka zueka." Schwitters's engaged in furious nightly barked conversation with another internee, an elderly Viennese businessman. While the latter had a deep mastiff-like bark, Schwitters's woof, one observer recalled, was higher-pitched, like a dachshund's – all of which seems to have been accepted as a part of the rich tapestry of camp life.



When Schwitters was released after 18 months, his long-anticipated move to London was an anticlimax. His address book, preserved in the Sprengel Museum, crammed with the details of artists, critics and dealers, shows he had no shortage of useful contacts. But with the war on, few people were buying pictures. At his single solo exhibition in Britain, he sold only one work.

Gretel Hinrichsen, now 93, whose husband Klaus was interned alongside Schwitters, met him several times during this period. "He was always very scruffy. Even by the standards of the war, when people generally were shabby, he looked in a bad state."

But at his lodgings in Barnes, west London, Schwitters met the great love of the latter part of his life, Edith Thomas. "He knocked on her door to ask how the boiler worked, and that was that," recalls Gretel Hinrichsen. "She was 27 – half his age. He called her Wantee, because she was always offering tea."

In spring 1945, the couple moved to the Lake District, which Schwitters had been told resembled his beloved Norway, and where he understood living would be cheap. They were soon practically destitute, Schwitters exchanging drawings for bread and other essentials. But he befriended the local bookseller in the hope of winning portrait commissions and painted the surrounding views he thought most likely to sell. And despite the scepticism of the locals, he and Wantee made firm friendships. The war was now over, but for Schwitters, the Germany of his youth no longer existed. He was now in the Lake District for good.

Things improved with the receipt of the grant from MoMA. Schwitters was already at work on his *Merz Barn*, travelling the five miles from Ambleside by bus every day. Rather than recreating the angular structure in Hannover, which had been destroyed by bombing in 1943, he began employing flinty yet flowing forms and gritty textures that looked as though they'd emerged organically from the local stone. But Schwitters was only able to work on the barn for a matter of months before an attack of temporary blindness, a broken leg and finally a stroke forced him to abandon the project in July 1947. He died from a heart attack the following January, aged 60, the day after receiving documents confirming his naturalisation as a British citizen.

Schwitters was the subject of major exhibitions in America within years of his death, and his reputation revived steadily in Germany from the mid-Fifties onwards. But despite the enthusiasm of British artists, notably Richard Hamilton, who was instrumental in removing the completed wall of the *Merz Barn* to Newcastle University for safe-keeping in 1965, Britain seems to have been the last place to acknowledge Schwitters's importance. And nowhere in Britain seems to have been more indifferent to the artist than his adopted home, the Lake District.

When Mary Burkett became director of Kendal's Abbot Hall Gallery in the late Fifties, she was astonished to learn of Schwitters's association with the area. No one, it seems, had any recollection of the German artist who had lived in Ambleside only a decade before. When she finally discovered the whereabouts of the *Merz Barn*, and went back to confront those who had denied knowledge of Schwitters, they were dumbfounded. "I thought you meant an artist," said one. "Not a madman."

The art of becoming 'Swedish': Immigrant youth, school careers and life plans

When discussing barriers to integration, we often focus on language skills, cultural capital, supportive environments and other more obvious, distinct and material aspects that have an impact on educational achievement. In the present study, we have instead chosen to look at how young immigrants construct their life plans, and how this relates to their perceptions of ethnicity, neighbourhood and identity. The sample used here consists of a total of 10 individuals. The interviews were used to explore certain designated dimensions and processes. All interviews were conducted in the school environment, in classrooms and other locations within the school. The students attended two different vocationally oriented study programmes: one focused on health promotion, the other on pre-school children. A narrative—sociological approach is used in the analysis. The young people's perceptions and narratives are analysed in relation to concepts such as: territorial stigmatization, identity, inclusion/exclusion and life plans. The key finding is that these young people try to adapt to certain normative expectations connected to the notion of Swedishness. Being 'in sync' with this normative conception leads to self-confidence, whereas being 'out-of-sync' leads to low self-esteem. ■

Highlights



Jamie Fitzpatrick

Jamie Fitzpatrick's solo exhibition at VITRINE, Bermondsey, in February 2016.

Fitzpatrick's practice deals with the rhetoric of image making, the relevance of the figure and how objects and totemic gestures such as flags, statues or plinths are used within the work to impose forms of power, authority and control. By employing the motifs of figurative art, patriarchal depictions of masculinity and nationhood, Fitzpatrick's domineering sculptures express intention of undermining them, rendering them absurd and dumb.

Fitzpatrick will exploit the limitations of the 16-metre vitrine as a means to further disrupt and undermine the works.

Since graduating from the Royal College of Art in 2015, Fitzpatrick has exhibited widely across the UK, including; UK/RAINE: a collaboration between the Firtash Foundation and Saatchi Gallery, exhibiting the work of emerging artists from UK and Ukraine, in which he was awarded the Sculpture Prize; New Contemporaries 2015 in Primary, Backlit and One Thoresby Street, Nottingham and ICA, London; Cowley Manor Sculpture Garden Show, Cheltenham and Pause Patina at Camden Arts Centre, London. Fitzpatrick is also part of Pangaea Sculptor's Centre six-week Autumn Residency Programme showcasing the works within two exhibitions: Taking Shape: Sculpture on the Verge and Which one of these is the non-smoking lifeboat? ■

fARTissimo

By Thanos Kalamidas

Artificially Popular uncooperative

In a constantly consuming world, where revolutions are supermarket case and rebels have a day job in the stock-market wearing Mao stamps on their luxurious t-shirts and handmade shoes, only art could ridicule, mesmerize and provoke them. Only art could cooperate executives and art dealers into a chorography of ignorance and hysterics. Precipitate stupidity and elevate self-sarcasm in unearthed debts.

Max Ernst attacked the conventions and traditions of art, all the while possessing a thorough knowledge of European art history. He questioned the sanctity of art by creating non-representational works without clear narratives, by making sport of religious icons, and by formulating new means of creating artworks to express the modern condition.

Interested in locating the origin of his own creativity, Ernst attempted to freely paint from his inner psyche and in an attempt to reach a pre-verbal state of being. Doing so unleashed his primal emotions and revealed his personal traumas, which then became the subject of his collages and paintings. This desire to paint from the sub-conscious, also known as automatic painting was central to his Surrealist works and would later influence the Abstract Expressionists.

Opinion

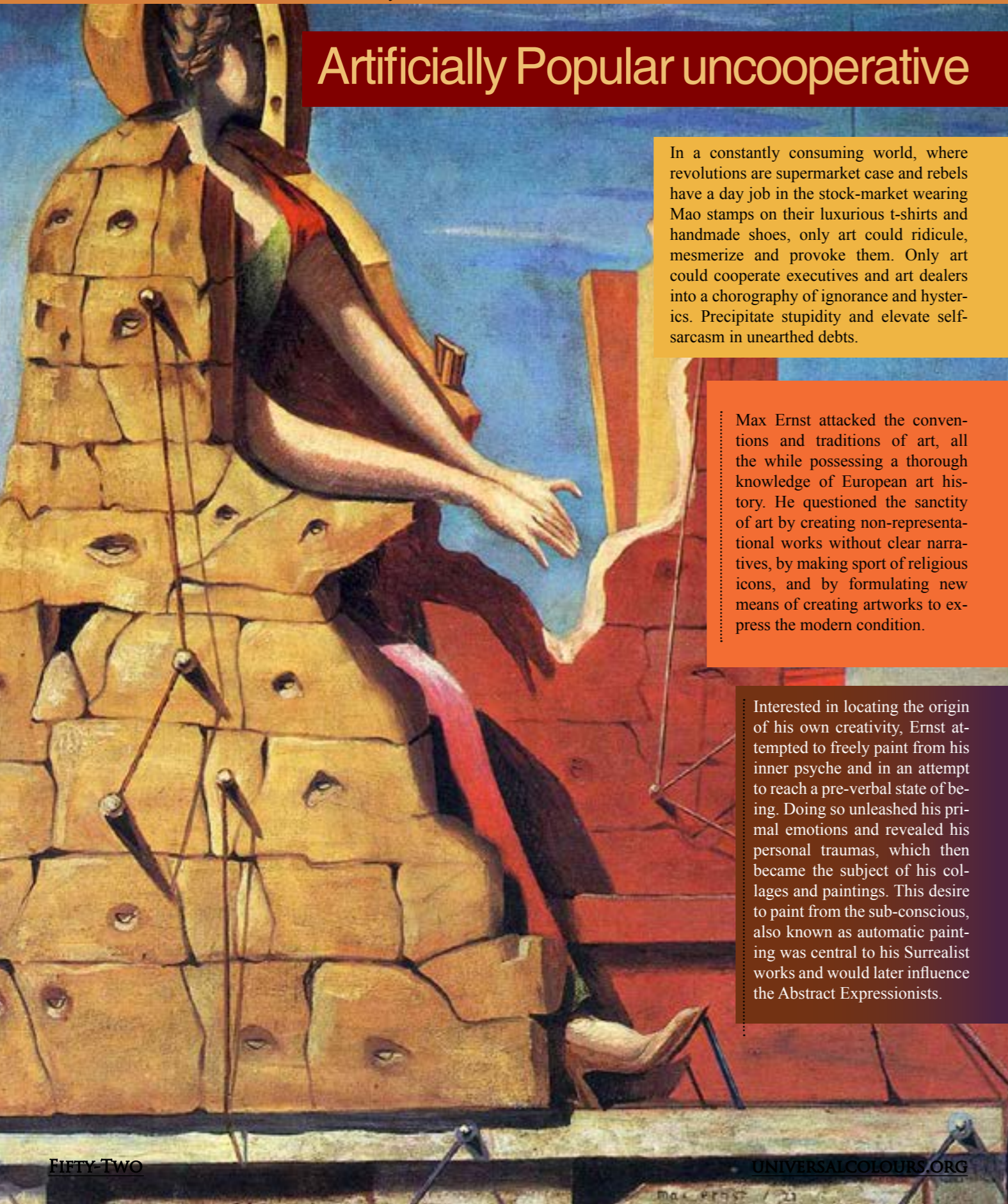
The Supermarket In Pop Culture

“The supermarket is an expression of our times, the pop art of everyday life.” This is the gospel word of Karl Lagerfeld, fashion designer and creative director at Chanel, passed down from on high at the brand’s salubrious AW14 show this past March. Staged in Paris’s Grand Palais, Lagerfeld’s show - a nod to 1964’s NYC pop-art exhibition *The American Supermarket* - stocked a made-to-spec supermarket with authentic, Chanel-branded groceries and models. Rihanna and Cara Delevingne wheeled each other about in trolleys, and it’s perhaps thanks to them that the event spawned 2014’s eminent micro-trend, ‘normcore’.

But what haunted me was that little quote: “the pop art of everyday life.” Does this statement mean anything? It’s impossible to say, but I had to like it. There’s a naive, mystical wisdom at work there. Clearly pop art imitates mass production rather than vice versa, but with his quote Lagerfeld makes a thrilling postmodern statement, namely that art, commerce, the media and reality have so tightly intertwined that to talk about an authentic original

is authentically impossible. The product is the advert is the desire. As Babette Gladney quips in Don DeLillo’s *White Noise*: “It’s all a corporate tie-in. The sunscreen, the marketing, the fear, the disease. You can’t have one without the other.”

There’s something in the idea. Ever since pop art, supermarkets have intrigued left-leaning artists, the idea being that, as ‘lifestyle showrooms’ full of class symbols, they generate liberal capitalism’s social order. As such they make a handy symbol of class oppression: notably *The Clash* got “lost in the supermarket” (“I came in here for a special offer / A guaranteed personality”) and Pulp’s ‘Common People’ reaffirmed the aisles as class warfare’s true arena. But recent years have revealed a new angle: instead of flat-out rejecting the supermarket, much of the new generation takes a nuanced stance against consumer culture, one in which corporate reality and corporate illusion can peacefully coexist. ■



Why do politicians seem to hate the arts?

By Rosie Millard

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/why-do-our-politicians-seem-to-hate-the-arts-8459142.html>

AS SO OFTEN, IT'S FOR the leaving of a job that the occupant saves her best lines. Liz Forgan, outgoing boss of the Arts Council, has bitten the hand that fed her, by suggesting that the Government is about as keen on culture as cats are about having baths. Even Michael Gove (Education) and Maria Miller (er, Culture) would be happier, Forgan suggests, to be seen at the Emirates Stadium than the ENO. Football is a much better look, frankly.

She is spot on. Even though British culture is revered across the world; even though it provides jobs, inspiration and joy to millions in the UK, you will never catch a politician actually attending an arts event. I have never bumped into an MP, let alone a minister, in a theatre foyer. If they do go at all, they creep in after the house lights have been dimmed, as if they had a problem parking, and were late.

It used to be just the left which was nervous about being seen bothering the Crush Bar. Lord Gowrie, one of Forgan's predecessors, told me Labour politicians would rather have their eyes poked out than be seen enjoying Mozart. Under Tony Blair's watch, the arts were absolutely a four-letter word, more so even than God. Can anyone ever remember seeing Blair at any cultural event? He only insisted on turning up at the opening of Tate Modern because a) the Queen was there and b) the opening of the Dome had been so awful. There was only one politician happy to be seen at arts events, and that was Chris Smith, who was gay, and was therefore expected to hang out with luvvies.

Honorable mention must also go to John Major, who insisted that culture be included in the lottery as a Good Cause. But of course Major, son of a circus performer, had no problem with showbiz. If the lottery were invented today, I seriously doubt the arts would make the cut.

Why do politicians hate culture? Is it because it is difficult to understand? Only a complete moron would suggest the arts live in a rarified zone of smartypants speaking Latin and reading Cuneiform. And the rules of football are quite difficult too (offside, anyone?) At the Olympics opening ceremony, Danny Boyle had no issue with our culture. Who was there? Shakespeare. Elgar. Blake. Dickens. Milton. E L Travers. J M Barrie, and Paul Weller, to name but a few. British culture was quite rightly given as much of the glory as cricket, the Health Service and Sir Tim Berners-Lee. The politicians had to watch it, and applaud, uneasily.

Pretending to be a football fan is probably an easier role to manage for members of this "we're-all-in-it-together" Government, because football doesn't brook dissent. Great art picks holes in the status quo; it asks questions, it poses challenges. It is about beauty and love and life and tragedy, about boredom and disappointment and despair, sometimes all on a single canvas – an awkward portfolio for an MP to tuck under his or her arm. ■

STOP THE WW

Energetic Mixture and Insecurity

By Avtarjeet Dhanjal

BRITAIN AS AN EX-COLONIAL POWER, according to Salman Rushdie, never de-colonised its thinking and its language, as Germany deliberately went through the process of de-Nazification after the Second World War. As a result some ugly thoughts of 'us and them' still lingers on in the deep corners of the British psyche, and occasionally raise its head here and there.

West Midlands known as Black Country was a powerhouse of the empire and home of heavy industry. The work was dirty, very few locals were ready to take it on; British governments of the time had to bring in migrant labour from the commonwealth countries.

Initially, single men came here with the idea to work for few years, and to return and live in their own countries. Slowly one by one these migrant workers started to bring their families.

Most migrant workers worked in factories, sometimes 7 days a week, were hardly seen on the street; but when their wives and children arrived; with their different colour of the skin and different clothing became very visible on the streets and in the schools, and with the time migrant population increased and in some area it reached a substantial percentage of the population.

It certainly frightened many such as Enoch Powell then a Tory Member of Parliament. In April 1968 Powell made his controversial 'Rivers of Blood speech' in which he warned of massive civil unrest if mass immigration of black and Asian commonwealth inhabitants continued. Powell died in 1998, nearly half a century later his controversial speech still makes the Black community nervous with insecurity.

The passing of time offers its own healing remedies. Half a century later the second and third generation of these migrant has not only become an integral part of the society but it generates a dynamic creative energy to make whole vibrant.

Last week a friend of mine who teaches Philosophy and Cultural Politics at Wolverhampton University recommended me to attend the opening of an exhibition of photographs by Komlail Achall at the 'Asylum Gallery in Wolverhampton, a town only twenty miles from Birmingham. (August 14, 2015, <http://www.theasylumartgallery.com/#!underlying-perspectives/cr19> "UNDERLYING PERSPECTIVES")

Wolverhampton, once a non-descriptive place except its bi-cycle industry, in 1960s was the constituency of the Enoch Powell, is now generating its own creative energy making the whole culture a multi-cultural vibrant mixture. Or one can put it this way that this new generation of the non-white population, is generating its own creative energy that is where the Asylum gallery and Komlail Achall and her series of photographs fits in.

According to the brief, "The exhibition presents the face of multiculturalism and evidences the everyday lives of people in city centres, a visual representation of roles and rituals played out in popular culture.



The photography portrays postcolonial identities within urban life and shows a multitude of Diasporas, hidden contradictions and tensions between societies based on many political opinions and positions."

The juxtaposition of Vogue and other examples of high cultural overlapped with chaddur clad migrant women in the black and white images of Achall, was very refreshing. It may be something in the air of Wolverhampton that Enoch Powell, who a first class Greek scholar from Cambridge could also hold such controversial thoughts those he expressed in his famous speech 'Rivers of Blood'.

Today the British people, I should rather say 'Tory leaders' are falling into a very similar mode of insecurity as Enoch Powell did in 1968.

Recent headlines illustrate the point better than my own words.

(Sky News 23 April 2015)

Britain is to send one of the largest ships in the Royal Navy to help deal with the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean.

Last Drop

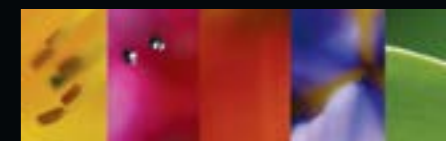
The Guardian August 09, 2015

David Cameron shares the foreign secretary's concerns about millions of African migrants threatening the UK's standards of living, Downing Street has said.

I wonder how much creative energy these migrants in Calais hold which UK will miss?????

Famous Indian scholar and professor at the Harvard University Homi K. Bhabha summed up the energetic mixture of cultures and values in his brief description, "We find ourselves in the moment of transit where time and space cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion."

Avtarjeet Dhanjal August 2015



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