Reflection Assignment Proposal.

NFT’s under the view of McLuhan.

I am very much interested in the use of technology for creative purposes. The rise of web 3.0 and the Metaverse sparks my interest. I want to understand it better and reflect on how the medium is being used and on its potential. I wonder how this will get embedded in everyday life.

Looking for a theoretical framework, the media theory proposed by Marshall McLuhan is one of the standards in the field. Even though his work is from before the internet era, or the information explosion of the beginning of the century, his reflections remain very up to date with contemporary media.

In this reflection work, I want to combine those (Mc Luhan’s theory and the Metaverse) and analyze the NFTs as a new artistic medium.

The relevance of this reflection for my practice is to go beyond buzzwords.

Although McLuhan is considered a standard in media theory, some of his statements as “the global village,” “the medium is the message,” or “the electric age” are often uttered very lightly and divorced from the theoretical and practical context that McLuhan presented them in. In any case, having a solid grasp of McLuhan’s theory is a must for any (serious) artist working with (new) media.

A similar situation takes place with web 3.0. and NFT’s Most of the “creative uses” I have seen of the NFT’s as an artistic medium come from the commercial field and seem more a pathological FOMO. Is that really art?

Nevertheless, I firmly believe that NFT’s, WEB 3.0 and its current speculations, will have a tremendous influence on the media of the future and my practice. Therefore, investigating how the existing theoretical frameworks fit – or misfit – these new technological developments is vital to any artist involved in the field.

On the practical side, I intend to introduce McLuhan’s laws of media as framework for my analysis. I will use his well-known books, “Laws of Media”, “Understanding Media” and “the Medium is the Massage,” “the Gutenberg Galaxy”, together with material made available by the McLuhan Estate and remediations of his work.

I will then diverge in two paths. On one side, I will use McLuhan tetrad to look at NFTs. I will focus on the “10 Most expensive art NFT’s ever sold”. On the other side, I will make interviews with advocates, and detractors, of NFTs to gather their opinion on the subject. I will then put them together in a personal reflection of my take on NFT’s.

Here a visual depiction of the structure.

The main questions I would like to answer are:

* What is the tetrad of McLuhan?
* How does the tetrad of McLuhan apply to NFTs?
  + What do NFT’s enhance?
  + What do NFT’s make obsolete?
  + What do NFTs retrieve that had been obsolesced earlier?
  + What do NFT’s reverse or flip into when pushed to extremes?
* What is the opinion of NFTs of some established artists.

McLuhan, I want to relativize NFT’s against other mediums like paiting, television, radio, web art (web 2.0).

In addition to this, given that web 3.0 is still in its early years, it gives room to speculate about its adoption.

References:

* Marshall McLuhan, Laws of Media
* Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media
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