**EXPLORE POST-INTERNET ART!**

Welcome!

Here we explore Artie Vierkant’s piece on *The Image Object Post-Internet* where they discuss the concept of Post-Internet art.

*Post-Internet Art* as described by Vierkant for the context of their piece is “*a result of the contemporary moment: inherently informed by ubiquitous authorship, the development of attention as currency, the collapse of physical space in networked culture, and the infinite reproducibility and mutability of digital materials.”*

Be exposed to a few quotes taken from Vierkant’s piece, ponder them, then dive into the Post-Internet art discussion.

Click Explore to begin exploring!

1. ***“everything is anything else”*** *(page 4, 4th paragraph)*

context

Vierkant continues to explain this as an object not being limited to a fixed state or simply one version of itself. Meaning that one art object can be manipulated, recontextualized, or recreated by the same or another artist and hold the same level of recognition for its conceptual thinking. An art object can also just be shown, represented, described, or morphed in various ways while keeping the same meaning or essence. Especially online and in this “post-Internet climate” as they’d say. This being very much tied to Conceptual Art and representational strategy, it is expressed that this form of exploring an art object has indeed existed pre-internet however, the Post-Internet period has served as a catalyst for these concepts in extreme ways.

analysis

Something close to the concept around this quote is René Magritte’s famous piece called The Treachery of Images where the words “*ceci n’est pas une pipe*” are displayed under the image of a pipe. This expressing the idea that something isn’t something if it is only the image of something. In this Post-Internet period, that concept is almost eradicated. We seem to be in this in between state of the physical and the non-physical. So much art is online and can’t always be necessarily represented in it’s physical form and, if it was, it would almost be an entirely different piece within itself. The non-physical state for art objects is so vast, and increasing everyday with its contents, reiterations, and possibilities that the boundaries of what is what and what takes ore of a form, value, or weight over another.

1. ***“the source object can no longer be regarded as inherently greater than any of its copies.”*** *(page 5, 3rd paragraph)*

context

In the context of the text, and in the context of the Internet, an “original copy” doesn’t mean much. If it even exists. The Internet spreads information quicky and widely. People being exposed to some much don’t always have access or care to find out where the source of an online object is, if it has an original copy, or its date of creation. This facilitates ideas being repurposed, recreated, or identical copies being created with little detection and no credit to the inspiration or source to the original. When the text argues that the “source object can no longer be regarded as inherently greater than any of its copies” it continues to say that yes on the internet we know a source object exists, a source idea exists, but its necessity and importance have very little connection to the copy.

Another argument is that even if the original is found, if the “copies” are made using a different method or medium, how can they be compared? The example of the text is creating a sculpture by using a video as the original. Even if the theme and story of the video is conveyed in the sculpture, they will still be different, and neither can be “inherently greater” than the other.

analysis

In terms of artistic value, it does seem reasonable to take the stance that in this Post-Internet period an object having that status of a “source object” or a “copy” has no effect of one being greater than the other. However, the work itself and its execution can still be tied to them and have an effect on that value. Just because one is the original does not mean that it is necessarily good or of value and same goes for a copy. That said, there is still something important to say about tracing ideas or inspiration and with that the importance of such original copies allowing for that inspiration at times. It is true that in today’s ever stimulating world, it is difficult to say where original ideas originate and if they even exist to a degree. However, one’s acknowledgement for this limbo between what is an original source should to not deter one from doing their best to give credit to work that influenced them. It is easy to dismiss the work that goes into creating art, especially with the Post-Internet period where the physical form is less depended upon however, that work and creativity, should still be held to artists.

1. **“The use of “We” is not to advocate solely for participatory structures of art but to insist on a participatory view of culture at large, and ultimately of taking iconoclasm itself as a quotidian activity.”***(page 6, last paragraph)*

context

This is said regarding the aspect of observing art and the common occurrence of a viewers making dissatisfactory comments in which insinuates that to satisfy the viewer, the artist should be the one doing the changes or the work to do so. Vierkant argues that

*““They” venerates this absoluteness, sanctifies it, while its opposite, “We,” postures towards the creation of an alternative and constitutes an actual schism*”

and so one should take that criticism and use that as inspiration to accomplish that themselves. Given the art and methods to accomplish it are so accessible through the internet today, why not do it yourself. This thus furthering this idea of the Post-Internet period where original copies and copies are rampant. Why not take advantage of that to bind this relationship between the artist and the viewer. Vierkant continues to summarize this beautifully with:

*“These are conditions endemic to Post-Internet society, allowing for a ubiquitous authorship which challenges*

*notions of the “definitive history” or the “original copy.” Just as Barthes' proclamation of the “death of the author” is*

*in fact a celebration of the “birth of the reader” and the “overthrow[ing of] the myth,” culture Post-Internet is made*

*up of reader-authors who by necessity must regard all cultural output as an idea or work in progress able to be*

*taken up and continued by any of its viewers”*

analysis

There was a mention of this idea that only the artist/author or the higher members in society were the ones able to act on criticism and thus this segregation between the author and the viewer arose and how that is not the case anymore. Given internet, our access to skills, information, and the ability to make changes has most definitely increased our ability to take things into our hands. This idea of a stronger concept of “We” to allow for more of community engagement is enticing. I believe as an artist one of the most interesting things is seeing works impact your art can have. One could even go to say that art in its truest form is to satisfy you inner self and not for the purpose of pleasing a crowd. Artists benefit from having a viewership yes, but when criticism is taken and something is creature for the sole purpose of pleasing the viewer, it has a different feel to it. Criticizing an artist’s decision making brings you no where because it was not made to please you.

1. ***“Ironically, the most radical and ‘progressive’ movements of the Post-Internet period would be those who either pass by either largely unnoticed” due to a decision to opt out of any easily-accessible distribution networks, or else would be composed of a community of people producing cultural objects not intended as artistic propositions and not applying themselves with the label of artist.”*** *(page 7, 5th paragraph)*

context

Not only does the Post-Internet period allow for this lack of boundaries with what is of value and what is not through the lost idea of a source copy and loose regulation on copies themselves, these questions of “what is art” and “what it means to be an artist” has also loosened up. Vierkant expresses a little earlier in the text that

*“we have accepted that the singular qualification for the moniker ‘art’ is the intention of any one individual to label it as such.”*

What the text explains with the quote is that the Internet, “the screen,” the digital world has become an integral part of our lives. It is no longer a place that separates people, but, on the contrary, a “communal space” as said in the text. Through the Internet, it becomes easy to spread one’s art, and therefore, the text argues that “the most radical and ‘progressive’ movements of the Post-Internet period” are people who don’t identify as artists while creating “cultural objects,” or people who are not using “easily-accessible distribution networks” and are therefore “largely unnoticed.”

analysis

In this discussion about debatably unanswerable questions of “what is art” and “who is an artist” and “what it means to be an artist” allows for an interesting reflection on their evolution through time. Vierkant makes a very interesting comment that adds to what the answers to those questions might mean today in this Post-Internet period. Technology evolves so fast around us we sometimes forget to question how those rapid changes affect us. Our society seems very outdated at time regarding where we our with technology. That said, relating back to artists today, what Vierkant comments on allows us to see that we are living the direct opposite of what artists 1000 years or more were but for some reason, it doesn’t feel all too different. It almost reminds me of inflation.

1. ***“extraordinary is now also the ordinary—the myth is also the everyday”*** *(page 8, 2nd paragraph)*

context

Vierkant mentions this in relation to the idea that today, mythology is everywhere and has become part of our everyday life. We see mythology with superheroes in films and books. They have become part of our everyday life and they are easily accessible. Anyone can find images of films on the Internet or know of a story without seeing the movie or reading the book.

analysis

This idea of the unimaginable now being imaginable due to the power of the internet is quite intriguing because again, it is another cultural aspect that changed through time and the evolution of technology. The saying “imagine the impossible” could now be “create the impossible”. The internet gives us enormous amounts of freedom and through creativity that is especially true. Vierkant expresses that through the over saturation and fiction movies and media and that just goes to show the direction we are heading. An enormous amount of media representation of fiction and pure imagination of the impossible.

1. ***“move seamlessly from physical representation to Internet representation”*** *(page 10, 2nd paragraph)*

context

In Vierkant’s works, this was said to be the goal for either “an intention of universality, or created with a deliberate irreverence for either venue of transmission.” They precede this with the comment that today’s generation is very image based and that communication through imagery is what reaches the largest audiences and has the best responses. Continuing to say that using language to explain a visual artwork can be complicated and sometimes inadequate. “Dealing with language can too forcibly illustrate the thoughts behind an image or belittle a work if the text is not as clever or aesthetic as the image itself.” Therefore, how a physical visual work like a painting or a sculpture (or anything analog) is transposed to a digital format is important in order to present the artwork in a still interesting and relevant way.

analysis

An “intention of universality” and “deliberate irreverence for either venue of transmission” makes a lot of sense because the ultimate goal for anything today should be universality, inclusivity, and adaptability. Especially today when there is so much technology allowing for such. This allows for the largest audience, the larger individuals being stimulated and inspired, and the more creativity. Allowing for universality, inclusivity, and adaptability also allows for facilitated sharing and citing of works. Which all in all is something that doesn’t ever hurt to have. The more information the better.

# Works Cited

Vierkant, Artie. 2010. *The Image Object Post-Internet.* PDF. New York. https://jstchillin.org/artie/pdf/The\_Image\_Object\_Post-Internet\_us.pdf.