

Submission #1:

Before I left, my boyfriend & I broke up. But now in Denmark, I entered a hot steamy summer fling with a local guy; we both know it will end at summer, since I will be heading back to the states.

I originally was going to use my summer time as a period of abstinence and reflection....that only lasted a week before I found a guy, not a rebound, but a companion. It started out as a cute date to help me learn Danish...but during one of our language lessons, he reached his hand into my mouth to readjust my tongue to make the ø sound. Since then, there has been lots of readjustments.

For a 'final' gallery exhibition, I would like to sit in the gallery next to a table of disposable rubber fruit flavor gloves. I would like to learn every audience member's middle name. Audience members would be invited to one-by-one put on the gloves, and then adjust my tongue to the needed formation that would spell out their middle name.

Submission #2:

Idea aesthetics... visual aesthetics...the appreciation of visual beauty or how we empathize with visual “realities”...the way we personally feel when viewing a construction of shapes and colors within a context.

Idea aesthetics...how we empathize with an idea, gesture or notion within a context. How does idea aesthetics differ from conceptual art? Return to this question later.

A Rothko has a life to it...it undulates with energy. You could walk into a room full of Rothko's paintings and choose which one you “like” the most. Or which one you empathize or relate to the most. This is aesthetics or empathy in action. A Rothko painting, color bleeding into color to form an a-pictorial object (painting)

Consider two ideas within the same context:

Context:

You are home. You live in New York City. It is Friday night, but you don't want it to be. You have been growing increasingly bored with the weekly routine, your usual company, the usual activities, the usual location.

Idea #1:

Contact usual company, undertake usual activity, keep within boundaries of usual location.

Idea #2:

Fortuitously, a distant, but good friend contacts you and is in town this evening. Leave boundaries of usual location to undertake atypical activities and catch up with a much-missed acquaintance.

These two ideas are very different within themselves, but even more different within the context. Each idea portrays a very distinct emotion. One of dull, stagnancy and the other of serendipitous excitement. Could you say each situation (a nonphysical concept) boasts an aesthetic?

Could you apply a color to each one? Could you apply a musical melody or a harmony to each one?

Maybe this situation is too much like a still life painting to appreciate its aesthetics. We are too distracted by technicalities, by craftsmanship, by the logical aspects of what we are trying to appreciate the beauty of. We are too distracted by the beauty that your long lost pal brings by showing up and shedding light.

Maybe it would be easier if the situation were more abstract...If the situation was more like a gesture or a notion. If you could look past the logics of the situation...not be distracted by the craftsmanship of it. In order to promote this naivety, we must construct a situation without purpose or function.

Context:

You exit an elevator and enter the top floor of a parking garage. It is roughly 4,000 square feet, enclosed, the ceiling supported by several dozen concrete pillars. All of the many parking spaces are empty and you are alone except for:

Idea #1:

Hundreds of cakes, each uniform, triple tiered, with pink icing and "I <3 NY" written on top.

Idea #2:

A large aquarium in the middle of the garage. A wide variety of aquatic life (flora and fauna) inhabit the tank.

In both cases, the context doesn't logically relate to the situation, therefore, the emotions that surround each idea is abstracted. Much like colors within a Rothko painting are not supported by shapes in order to bring them logic. There is a general aura to these ideas, an energy that you may be able to call an aesthetic.

Are aesthetics calculatable?

Does it matter?

Research aesthetics more...

Both ideas, (situations, gestures) feel different. The first is much more comical. When would you ever see this many cakes in one place, in this place of all places and brandishing the “I <3” NY” slogan. Who baked these cakes? There is absolutely no logical purpose for this situation, but it is beautiful in many lights. Just as a formal sculpture exhibits many aspects of beauty (scale, surface, color, form) an idea is multifaceted.

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Lack of honesty in visual art...more often then not the language that we use to discuss and describe visual art is ubiquitous. Not only is it ubiquitous, but it is superficial and false. Not only is it superficial and false, but it is angled to alienate those unfamiliar with the language, while, simultaneously providing a crutch for the writer to lean on...

(quote from actual artist statements and press releases)

From countless press releases, artists statements and interviews, you can extract diligent verbage. Artists, curators claiming that (art) work does what it does (and can) not do: explores, comments on, battles with, presents as, rejects, talks about, deals with. Why is it that we want art to be something else? Why is it that we want art (artists) to be a hero?

If art was doing everything we said it was doing, the art world would be a very different place...but that is besides the point...The reality is that this language is used as a crutch for those to create logic where there is none, or a logic of a different kind. An abstract painting doesn't have to “...deal with the issues of painting...” in order to be valid. An abstract painting does not present “the issues of painting.” The only thing that can do this is language. Universal, written and/or spoken language. This is why I am writing in modern English in order to convey the issues of art.

We feel a need to give art a purpose, because it has none. It exists and will continue to exist as long as we will. We feel the need to validate art's expensiveness and exclusiveness. Aesthetics are not valid anymore. We cannot do whatever we want. A photo of a child soldier is art because it “*comments on politics...*” Are we just covering up? Is the art world so embarrassed? It can never be wrong.

Banksy is an artist now. He "comments" on politics. Now he has the money to make shit that looks like art, commenting on politics.

“...if viewed within their context—as art—they provide no information whatsoever about any matter of fact.”

Joseph Kossuth – Art After Philosophy

Even if this work is dealing with, commenting on, exploring, about something etc etc...how deep can that be? How deep can you get within a 24”x 36” square? Why waste

your time staring and thinking about a small painting? I think that some mediums are best for doing certain things.

*“I do not make art,’ Richard Serra says, ‘I am engaged in an activity...’Serra, then, is very much aware of the implications of his work. If Serra is indeed just ‘figuring out what lead does’ (gravitationally, molecularly, etc) why should **anyone** think of it as art?”*

Joseph Kossuth – Art After Philosophy

For example, if you want to tell a full narrative (plot / character development and all) you would not create a painting, or a photograph or a song...you would make a film, or write an opera, or write a short story or a long story. The medium is a function. Sometimes it is fun to play with this function...use mediums that aren't the best for doing what you want...but you can go too far...

If I want to comment on the War in Iraq, I am not going to make a formal sculpture. It can only “say” so much. “Its bad?” “Its wrong?” Maybe it portrays a deep emotion related to the war...one that cannot be explained in words...but...even if it does, maybe this is better at use evoking emotions / philosophies and not commenting on wars. It is an excuse. The political artist is lazy and without commitment. A political documentary has function. A journalist studies details and disseminates information to the public. A curator that puts a bunch of abstract paintings in a room and orders them in a digestible way does just that. Makes a basic exhibition.

This is not to say that painting, photography or sculpture don't have their own functions. They are indiosyncratic. They do not need excuses. They do not need validations. A sculpture doesn't need to be exploring something. Most art doesn't have a reason for existing, but we are not comfortable with that. We are not comfortable with a lack of answers. We need a god to explain shit.

And all it really does, in the end, is confuse everyone. It propagates the idea that we need to make up lies in order to validate the creation of our work and validate the fact that we consider ourselves an artist and validate the fact that we don't want to work shitty jobs and want to spend our lives making awesome shit for an awesome community of people in order to be happy or feel in general.

Either you accept the language or you don't, either way, you're confused. You propagate the lies, pigeon holing work in order to make sense of it, resisting the urge to create anything that doesn't relate to your “*statement as an artist*” or changing ideas in order to fit within the words you chose to limit your work. Or, you are an outsider, who doesn't try to understand, because, there isn't anything to understand, we just pretend that there is. I guess that is our secret. Its not about figuring something out or understanding something, or knowing something that only you and the artist knows (cus fuck knows the

artist isn't going to say anything outright, [that would be...whats the fucking word...like Susan Sontag says...]). Art isn't that simple.

“The other aspect is the viewer who, most of the time, does not understand anything, and consumes his or her own culture twice removed. The viewer literally consumes the fact that he or she does not understand it and that it has no necessity to it other than the cultural imperative of belong to the integrated circuit of culture. But culture itself is only an epiphenomenon of global circulation.

The idea of art has become rarified and minimal even in conceptual art, where art ends in the non-exhibition of non-works in non-galleries – the apotheosis of art as a non-event. Reciprocally, the consumer moves through it all to test his or her non-enjoyment of the works.”

Jean Baudrillard – Art...Contemporary of Itself

Because art is not like everything else, it is more complicated. But it does share one thing with the rest: it is specific. Art is art. The aspects that belong to art, belong to art. When you make art, you are making art. When you make a painting, if it is a *painting*...you make a painting. There is no confusion when you make business. You made business. But art is complicated...it isn't as easy to know when you've made (or someone else has made) art.

“Being an artist now means to question the nature of art. If one is questioning the nature of painting, one cannot be questioning the nature of art. If an artist accepts painting (or sculpture) he is accepting the tradition that goes with it...”

Joseph Kosuth – Art After Philosophy

The purpose of making art, is to continue the production of art (specifically “*high quality*” art). I don't think you need more of a reason to make shit than that. What does it mean to make “*high quality art*.”?

Depends on what you value in art. Are there values in art that aren't subjective? Can we say that there is something that is intrinsically important to art? The only way to answer this question is to answer to what art's purpose is, which is subjectively impossible. I guess the purpose of art, at this point, is be without a purpose. Ever since Duchamp started taking functional objects and removed their function (displaced their function) by putting them in a useless context. That is the cliché idea of art, nowadays. But, regardless of how trite, it is, most importantly, art's largest badge.

The most unique quality that art has (by far) is the fact that its only function is to exist. It is a tool without a use.

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Why is fashion creeping into art?

What is happening?
Is visual art dead?
Do visual artists need more “alive” art forms to disguise as visual art?

Music is alive and well.
Music will never die.
It is utilitarian.

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Medium Specificity
What’s the point?

Submissions:

[#1. Jon Henry](#)

[#2. Jeremy Kiracofe](#)

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