

Comparing dada to pop art

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In this essay I will compare the Dada and Pop Art movements by depicting the characteristics of each art period, their style and social conditions that may have influenced the creation of each movement. The essay will describe the relationship between the Dada and Pop Art movements. The essay will show their similarities, differences, and the reason why Pop Art did not continue with the Dada tradition although Pop Art also utilized everyday objects as subjects to create art just like the Dada. Lastly, the essay will show how Pop Art is still very much part of today's art world.

Dada or Daism was an informal international art movement, with artists and followers in Europe and North America. The beginnings of this movement coincided with the outbreak of World War I. This artistic and literary movement started in 1916 and ended around 1923. Dada was born out of negative reaction to the World War I and as a way to protest against the conventional middle-class which the artists believed were the cause of the war. Dada excluded reason and logic, valuing nonsense, irrationality, irony and humor. The movement primarily involved visual arts, literature, poetry, manifestoes, art theory, theatre and graphic design. Art in the traditional sense was all about aesthetics, Dada represented the opposite. Dada's intention was to offend and shock common sense. (" Pop art/dada", 2013)

Dada artists developed the collage, photomontage, assemblage and readymade techniques. The collage, which imitated the techniques used during cubism through the pasting of cut pieces of paper items to include items such as transportation tickets, maps, plastic wrappers in order to represent features of life instead of still life. Photomontage - this technique

used scissors and glue rather than paintbrushes and paints to express views of modern life from images represented by the media.

The assemblage technique - is a three-dimensional variations of a collage; which again used everyday objects to produce meaningful or meaningless (relating to the war) pieces of work. Lastly, the "readymades" - these were everyday objects found or purchased and declared art by an artist. These objects would sometimes have titles and/or the artist's signature to provoke deeper thinking on the viewer. During this period there was no predominant medium to Dadaist art. ("Dada", 2013)

Pop Art (short for Popular Art) emerged in England in the early 1950s and late 1950s in the United States lasting through the early 1970s. Pop Art origins developed for different reasons in Great Britain and the United States. In the United States, it was a response to impersonal, mundane reality, irony and parody. In Britain, the origin of post-World War II also included irony and parody but its main focus was on the images of American popular culture.

Pop art was also a form of rebellion against abstract expressionism whose audience was a greedy middle class, according to the artists. Pop Art understood popular culture or so called material culture which was focused on the post-World War II generation who rebelled against the mysterious undertone of the abstract art. Pop artists wanted to express their hopefulness after so much poverty had been experienced during the World War II. ("Pop art-", 2013)

Pop Art was rooted in urban environment- London and New York. Pop Art used pieces of familiar images like advertising, labels, comic books, ordinary

cultural objects, film, and television, to express conceptual formal relationships. In addition, the artist also duplicated common mass production images such as beer bottles, soup cans, comic strips, road sign paintings, collages and sculptures either by incorporating these objects into their paintings, collages and sculptures. Artists usually used very bright colors, and flat images. Pop art is symbolic and realistic. Lastly, Pop Art's subjects are non-traditional which involves the viewer on the subject unlike the traditional still life motif which engaged the viewer on the formal qualities of the painting ignoring the subject. (" Pop art-", 2013)

Dada and Pop Art developed in part to oppose the status quo, standing up in opposition to the established elite art of their respective times. Pop Art and the Dadaist thought that the traditional artist was a prop of the elite and the powerful; hence, both movements created art that was anti aesthetic. Pop Art and Dadaism both used everyday objects to create art that was symbolic, realistic, and descriptive. Both movements used what was considered non-traditional motifs. Dadaism and Pop Art used their movement as a means of criticism for their respective times in which they lived. Lastly, Dada and Pop Art movements - to some degree - were influenced by a war. (" Pop art-" 2013)

Pop Art was somewhat an extension of Dadaism. Pop Art also delved into some of the same subjects as Dadaism; however, Pop Art substituted the harsh, sarcastic, and radical impulses of the Dada movement with an appreciation to popular culture. Pop Art artists wanted to express their optimism to a culture born during post-War World II who sought to acquire consumer goods in response to mass media advertising. Pop Art did not

critique the consumerists it simply recognized it as a natural fact of the times. (" Pop art/dada", 2013)

Marcel Duchamp's, Fountain, 1917 is considered a ' readymade' artwork from the Dada movement. The sculpture has become one of the most recognized modernist works from the Dada movement. With the Fountain, Duchamp took an everyday object of life, and changed its useful significance by calling it something else. By giving it a new title and point of view, Duchamp created a new thought for the urinal. Duchamp's insight that art can be about ideas instead of things, a notion that would ring true with later generations of artists. (Pop art/dada, 2013) Andy Warhol's, Campbell's Soup Cans, 1962, consisting of 32 canvases each being a painting of a can of soup flavor being offered at the time.

There is no clear explanation as to why Warhol chose to paint the soup cans, his usual reply to interviews as to why he painted the cans - he had soup every day. One of the traits of Pop Art is creating art from popular recognizable object that most everyone could relate to. Just like the Fountain, the concept was more important than the image. The fact that he chose to ' create' art by painting the cans correlates to Duchamp's Fountain by which both artists style was more anti-art; utilizing common objects as subject matter, evoking interest from the viewer on the concept rather than the object. (" Campbell's soup cans", 2013)

Pop Art is a direct descendant of Dadaism because it mocks the art world by using everyday motifs as subjects to create art. The Dadaist originated an irrational way of images to provoke reaction from the public on their work. Pop artists adopted the same visual method but concentrated their interest

on popular culture. The Pop Art movement replaced the negative, satirical and radical elements of the Dada movement. The Dadaist concentrated on anti-war politics, rejecting the prevailing standards in art by creating anti-art cultural works. (" Pop art", 2013)

The dawn of the Pop Art movement in the 50's not only impressed the wealthy, it changed the culture. So iconic and profound were the motivations behind this movement that its art is still featured, studied and produced today. It is clear that Pop Art was much more than just a fad, it is still very popular and it is continued to be called a success. It is hard to not identify traits of Pop Art as some of its peculiarities like the dotted image, strong and multiple colors, series of images on one print, famous people faces, and everyday objects continue to be used today. Pop Art can be found in print design on birthday cards, T-shirts, calendars, canvases, poster, and contemporary graphic design. (" The influence of", 2010)