

Research paper on the history of art: the artist christo javacheff (alias christo...

[Literature](#), [Biography](#)



Introduction

The history of art has been compared with that of literature. In comparable respects, both have continuity, change and no progressive improvement. Since they are both works of creativity, their histories are characterized by works that seem to go beyond circumstantial limitations with a timeless appeal. The history of art has evolved since the extant of humans. Today art involve so many disciplines in colleges and universities. (Kristine and Howard 1996 4, 41)

Christo Vladimirov Javacheff and Jeanne-Claude Denat de Guillebon are a couple whose works of have contribution to perpetuation and continuity of the history of art. Their impressive works have been marred controversies because of their scale. Christo and Jeanne-Claude were on the same date same time on June 13, 1935. Born in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, Christo studied art at the Sofia academy from 1953 to 1956. He went to Vienna where he enrolled for Fine Arts at Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. Only a semester later, he traveled to Geneva and later to Paris in 1958. Following these journeys, he lost his Bulgarian citizenship ending up being without a nationality. At France, he started painting portraits to earn a living, an occupation he has likened to prostitution. In his paintings, his signature was his family name “ Javachef” while his earlier works’ signature was “ Christo.”

Born in Casablanca and brought up by her father, a military officer in Morocco, Jeanne-Claude’s was brought up by her father alone having divorced with Jeanne’s mother shortly after she was born. Jeanne graduated

in 1952 at University of Tunis having studied Latin and Philosophy. She has been described as an extrovert with natural organizational abilities. She smoked, dyed her hair red, and hated cooking. She acknowledged becoming an artist out of her love for Christo. She died on November 18, 2009 in New York from brain complications.

Jeanne-Claude and Christo first met in 1958 and married in 1960 amidst controversial flopped wedding between Jeanne and Philippe Planchon. The couple's work of art revolved around the environmental; in fact, some writers call their works "the earth art." Some of their works included "*Wrapped Coast*", Sydney, (1968-69), "*wrapped Museum of Contemporary Art*", Chicago (1968-69), "*Wrapped Monument to Vittorio Emanuele, Italy*," (1970), "*The Pont Wrapped Reichstag*", Berlin (1971-95), "*Running Fence*", California (1972-76), "*Neuf Wrapped*", Paris (1975-85), "*The Umbrellas*" Japan - U. S. A. (1975-85) amongst many other vast-scale wrapping projects.

Jeanne-Claude's and Christo's first collaboration was seen in 1961 when they jointly covered part of Cologne's barrels. This was their first monumental project, "*Iron Curtain*" in which they used oil apparel and curtain as mock expression of to the authorized against Berlin Wall. In this work of art, Jeanne-Claude blocked with a curtain wall for a few hours streets in Cologne. The couple arrived in New York in 1964, and settled in the United States before the end of that year. Startlingly, their works were credited to Christo's until 1994 when installations and other outdoor works retroactively earned credit to both of them: "Christo and Jeanne-Claude."

While in United States, with limited command of English, Christo displayed his works in several works including Castelli Gallery of New York. Analysis of his works is an excellent prototype of Marcel Duchamp's concept of conceptual art (Honour and Fleming 2005: 800). Christo has 'reduced the creativity act to an attractively simple level, using single, intellectual ideas to rediscover the object of, or activity of art.' Jeanne-Claude once disqualified people's interpretation of their works of arts saying that they absolutely had no purpose beyond being for 'beauty' and 'art', that their works were not indeed to give any message. While Jeanne-Claude's view contradicts conceptual art's definition according Duchamp's view, both of their works are an excellent manifestation of conceptual art. Arguably, first collaborated work metaphorical of the Berlin wall was an expression of 'message' to the authorities.

The couple excelled in their works of arts. Having exhibited in the galleries across the United States, France, Italy, Germany and other major cities, the resist have had profound effect in the discipline of art. Their art of 'wrapping' the natural and human structures have redefined way of exhibiting creative works. Their work "Wrapped Walk Ways" (1977-78) at, Jacob Loose Park, in Kansas City, was complete and figurative expressing the nature of conceptual art. Still in line with the couple's view of their workshop art as of aesthetic, the work present conceptual art in another perspective. It took them along time to come up with and complete the project. It complied with the rule of conceptual; art set by Duchamp, which depicted human desires and continuity in the piece of work.

In the “ Wrapped Ways” project, Jeanne-Claude and Christo installed 12, 450 square meters of saffron-colored nylon fabric on garden walkways and paths covering 4. 4 Kilometers of Jacob Loose Memorial Park in Kansas. The installation was done in three days between October 2nd and 4th with 84 people employed to help in the installation. Since the artists never accepted any sponsorship of any kind, all the costs and expenses committed in the project were borne by the couple. They earned by selling preparatory works such as drawings, collages, lithographs and etcetera. (Kristine and Howard 1996: 549)

The wrapped walkways and paths remained wrapped until October 16th 1978 when saffron material was removed and recycled by the Kansas City Parks department. This piece of work of art was unique and indeed changed the art scenes and the entire history of art. By using their own to exhibit there works of art, his type of art was one of its own kinds. This project took the art scene, such succinct works of art with such scale-reengineered creativity. The artists, in this project and others precisely conceptualize ideas and with little effort and manipulation the friends of works of arts have been taken aback. Purely designed for beauty and aesthetic, the works portrayed human desires and suggested through unclear, indirect, and intellectual works of art using fantasy. People often want to live in beautiful environments free of dart. This installation not only showed the important aspects of human and the desire of the American people but also portray how new ideas and creativity can be combined to bring new styles of art and varying definition of challenging experiences of art in general.

Their work “ The Running Fence” was acquired in definitive record in 2008 by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Installed in Sonoma and Marin Counties, California in 1972-76, the work was one of the many temporary installations of that that took those 42 months of collaborative efforts to install. It was 24½ miles long and 18 feet high, with one end dropping down to the Pacific Ocean. This monumentally vast work of art was contracted out of 240000 square feet of heavy white woven fabric of nylon, steel cables measuring over 150 kilometers long, 2050 steel posts, 350, 000 hooks and 130, 000 earth anchors. The project was entirely sponsored by Christo and Jeanne-Claude. The erected fence stood for only two weeks in the September of 1976. The work has been filmed into “ Running Fence revisited”

The " Running Fence" Revisited are screened in some of the major exhibition galleries. Janet Maslin, a New York Times art writer, once described the Running Fence in the film as “ the next best thing to have been in existence.” The Running Fence story is not a tale just unlimited endurance but a story of two artists whose works were nearly over insurmountable. The Running Fence was a temporary creativity of art, odds enough but delivered joy and beauty to the lovers of art; it was a story of and about the people, places, and events.

The installation made many more aware of the incredible art and other possibilities of creativity works. This conceptual art stunned the world of art. The “ Running Fence” stunned the people of Sonoma County and the rest of the world. “ There will never be another Running Fence,” Christo said in an *Eye Level* interview. Indeed, there will never be another “ Running Fence”

and if it were, then will no longer be creative enough to attract and influence other artists. As a way of appreciating their works, the couple regularly got requests from cities or organizations to replicate their works in other places. Commenting on the requests, Christo said, “ that misses the point. The power in the art is in its transitory.” (Pagliasotti 2002)

Richard B. Woodward, an art writer asserts that the Running Fence has been called one of the “ most influential art projects of the 20th century.” He records Christo’s comments about the project while revisiting the site twenty years after the event “ it was certainly one of the most successful. It is amazing to hear many people say viewing Running Fence changed the way they looked at the landscape and art forever.” Christo’s and Jeanne-Claude’s, art, their creation, was able to affect them in a way the traditional artists could not. (2010).

At the removal of the installation, the materials were donated to the local and the authorities. Nearly half people present at the event seemed to have found a way to reuse the materials from the project. Being farmers, they used them in their ranging operations. Some made windbreaks with the fabric and the project ended officially in September 1976, exactly a fortnight after its installation. While this brought physical end to the piece of art, the Running Fence has remained alive. The actual Running Fence is gone, the materials have been converted for other uses, but the memories live on to date. For instance, at American Art Museum, " Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Remembering the Running Fence" has been devoted to one of the couple's most ambitious and evocative works of art.

Whether "Running Fence" would be impossible to accomplish in today's America is hard to gauge. The nearly bare contours of beautiful hills were made more sensual by the project. The visual variation of the piece as it responds to sun, wind, fog, and ocean are attractive. The determination of the couple of artists and their resolute faith and love for the works of and their unusual ideas seem to have earned confidence, respect, trust, and affection from people who had never heard of site-specific art. Christo involved the community in his works. While persuading over 57 farmers to allow the fencing cross their lands Christo told them: "The art project is right now here with us. We are partners in this work of art." (Donovan 2002: 97, 115)

"We're surrounded with repetitious things. World's Fair, Olympic Games, each four years happen, Walt Disney - all that is all the routine we live. In addition, this project happened once... There was once the Running Fence or Wrapped Coast." Christo in an Australian TV interview once said in 2004.

To date, the lasting impact of "Running Fence" on the new 'art society' born after the project has continued to ignite serious conversations about "what is art" among citizens who had never thought it was relevant a question. It is commendable that the Smithsonian American Art Museum bought the project archive for "Running Fence" in 2008. It will be available for generations and Christo and Jeanne-Claude will continue to communicate to all of them.

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