

New figurative realists visual arts and film studies

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New Figurative Realists Visual Arts and Film Studies New figurative Realists refers to a group of artists active in 1960s and 1970s belonging to a movement that was reacting to minimalism, abstract expressions, and conceptual art (Schultz, 131). The realists were inspired by the rise in consumerism and mass production, and responded through representation of subjects in their artistic works. According to Schultz (131), the new realists believed since they were so involved in the world, and lacked the distance required to perceive what was real, there was a necessity to transform it. Thus, they proclaimed new ways of perceiving the 'real world', which were expressed in their art work (Schultz, 131). This essay focuses on the views, visual arts, and films of the new figurative realists such as Andy Warhol, Jack Smith, Alice Neel, Chick Close, and Robert Crumb. How the artists project a realist image of the world According to Marter (549), the new realists tended to see the world as an image, which they could split into various parts, and incorporate the parts in their works. They believed that people are so involved in the world, making them blurred to see reality (Schultz, 131). They suggested the need for artists to come together and form 'collective singularity' to face daily challenges, despite their differences. According to their views, this approach would help in bringing art and life close together, and enable people to perceive reality and enhance awareness. Thus, the new realists tended to render everyday situations, characters, objects, and dilemmas in a 'true-to-life' or a 'realistic' manner (Schultz, 131). How the new realist artists reflected issues One of the achievements of new realists emerged from direct attention to artistic, psychological, sociological, and political issues. According to Marter (551), they often incorporated such

issues into their artistic works. For instance, the paintings of Andy Warhol in 1960s poked fun at the white, middle class consumerism culture (Marter, 551). Jack Smith movie, *The Flaming Creatures* produced in 1962 satired Hollywood violent movies. Alice Neel was famous for her oil canvas portraits with effective and expressionistic use of line, color, and psychological acumen (Marter, 550). Chick Close was famous for his massive scale portrait, which are sought by numerous museums and collectors (Marter, 551).

Robert Crumb is recognized for his unique style of drawings and his critical and satirical presentation social and political issues affecting Americans. In summary, the realist artists incorporate artistic, psychological, sociological, and political issues in their artistic work. According to Marter, (550), the new realist artists derived these images from domestic, international, social, and political events. For instance, early in 1960s, most of the paintings of Andy Warhol were derived from the Cuban missile crisis, the campaign of Nelson Rockefeller and assassination of John F Kennedy, and Martic Luther King among others (Marter, 550). According to Hills and Tarbell (139), the artists felt that the use of particular images would act as an effective instrument of change. As a result of social and political events, in addition to incidents that were taking place in 1960s and 1970s, many of the figurative artists attained great sophistication related to the social and political aspects of art, and the art world. Using their artistic work, many joined together to protest against political incidents such as the war in Vietnam. They created artistic images, which acted as sources of daily reminders of certain events to the public. Thus they used the images to communicate to people about specific events and to encourage them to act where necessary (Hills and Tarbell, 140). The

paintings of these artists According to Hills and Tarbell (141), the paintings of the new realists were simply exhibited realism. The paintings were largely based on photographs, slides, magazine illustrations, and postcards (Hills and Tarbell, 141). Initially, the artists' paintings were involved hand-drawn images but they progressed to the use of machines. For Instance, in early 1960s Warhol was involved in hand-drawn paintings, but later progressed to the use of photographically derived silk-screening in paintings. The imagery used in the advertisement of these paintings was usually executed through application of ink to paper, and blotting the wet ink (Hills and Tarbell, 141). Hills and Tarbell (141) further say, videos of the new realist artists displayed exhibited feelings of aesthetic convictions, rather than emotional, or ethical feelings. A good example is the Flaming Creatures movie produced by Jack Smith in 1962 which had pornographic scenes (Hill and Tarbell, 141). The personality aspects of these artists were also expressed through the contents of the films. For example, most of Jack Smith's films had pornographic scenes; these films illustrated his notoriety as demonstrated in his life. Realist artists in the 1960s and 70s largely applied the reality or perceived experiences to coin artistic work inform of films, which expressed their general feelings concerning these issues. These artistic works in some cases were produced with extended subjectivity that demonstrated the feelings and practices of the artists. The new realistic artists were involved in studying at political, social, or economical dynamics and coming up with artistic works either to satire, or reevaluate the issue to bring about better understanding to the public. Works Cited Hills, Patricia and Tarbell, Roberta, The Figurative Tradition and the Whitney Museum of American Art: Paintings

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