

UPON NEW ART

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When we mention that we live in a rapidly changing world, what we mean by that is that this change occurs mainly at the cultural facet/ level. Feelings change, thoughts change, the language we use changes, the values we believe in change, and in parallel to these, forms of art change. All these changes, are not exterior to humans, they occur in the human world and due to man. With regards to the cultural history, the "panta rei" theory that was once put forth by Heraclitus of Ephesus, as an ontological principle, meaning, 'everything flows', has never been as valid as it would be in our days. The vertiginous alterations that came about in science, philosophy and art, especially after the World War II, caused man to become alienated with the world he lives in. For instance, micro-physics in physics, the genetic research in biology, the new thought systems in philosophy, the new concepts in art, new styles, the "isms", the capitalist views in the public level, introduced a new man, a new community, and a new world picture.

At this point, we can ask: what is the cause of the cultural changes and their fast pace? This cause is found in the nature/core of the contemporary era. This core is formed of the mutual interest and interaction of two determining factors. One of these factors is the attempt/venture of technology to take man under its own hegemony, to reign over the subject being. The other is man/ subject's attempt to protect his own individuality, his freedom of thought and creativity. Wherefore, the cultural world, we live in today, is defined by these two basic concepts and

categories. These concepts and categories are technology and freedom. The remaining culture seems take place amongst the latter.

From this standpoint, when we look at the art domain, we are faced with/ come upon the authentic concepts that the era brings along with the changes it undergoes. These are, for example, pop-art, op-art, happening, environment, installation and action-painting, video-art type of art concepts or applications. Not only on the level of apprehension and application, but at the same time, with respect to theory of art also, they exhibit an authenticity. In a manner of speaking, pop-art, that came out after the 1950's, initially perceived the painting as glued pieces of paper; later on, as daily cloth pieces, and more & more as compositions made out of industrial waste. Op-art is born as a concept after the 1965's. As could be understood from its name, it departs from optical vision senses, but would rather reflect them in geometrical forms. By relying on optical senses, op-art, at the same time of adopting the line coming from impressionism, adds a new line coming from the constructivism by geometricizing these impressions. Even in the process of forming such a synthesis, op-art takes under consideration the immediate surrounding and city life. As to 'happening', it embraces the idea of agreeing with the known reality, instead of that of interpreting objects and reality. For instance, in theatre, the opposition of the spectator and theater stage disappears, the theater stage and the spectator become one. Similarly, in painting, the unification of man and environment is targeted and this unification is supported by senses. The same will be valid for the environment.

Even though, the art discernments expressed in these general traces, appear different from each other in name and theory, in reality, one can say that they have certain mutual basic qualities. The most important of these qualities is that they take the avant-garde (leader and reformist) role amongst all art concepts. All these art concepts, however different they may be from each other, put forth, a conscious reaction to traditional art. In this sense, they are avant-garde and new. In spite all this, for

instance, conventional, traditional art, as compared to avant-garde art, seemed to place the objects of its art into an artificial disposition and obtain a factitious art environment. The factor that caused it to be artificial, is the perception of the art world as in relation to the deterministic world of objects. Such an art order, will inevitably, be an order relying on mind and logic. However, the stand art must take vis-à-vis objects, will be a stand based on the dialectic between logic and illogic. As to this dialectic, it is a way of life unapprehended/ungrasped by traditional art, and enforced by new art. This out of causality type of life style, carries and reflects even the most insignificant objects of daily life, such as trash material to the surface of new art.

This new mode of life anticipates a new type of sensitivity from man. For this reason, 'happening' requests from man the renovation of sensitivity and the adherence to an anarchist stand. The modernization and recency constitute the aim of all new art forms/ concepts. Novelty is considered as a fetish. If we are to say this as would an artist, a theorist of new art, Ben Vantier: "You like a flower bouquet, not because the flowers are red, but because, as you look at these flowers you are shocked by 'a new thing'. Thus, I substitute beauty with novelty."

Where novelty is evaluated as a fetish and perceived as an aim for art, art is commissioned to search for novelties on a continual basis: Novelty for novelty. The latter will at the same time, lead each art form that has terminated its full cycle, and terminated its era, to name it as 'ordinary', 'traditional/habitual' and to rebel against it. The anarchist character of new art emanates from the latter. The quest for novelty signifies a continual creation, without depending on any traditional principle. This continual creativity process implies that new art be found within an uninterrupted cycle. Such an act of creation, however, in a sense, denotes the constant self-externalization of human consciousness, and thus the constant subjectification of objects. The exorbitant subjectification of new art, should in a way be understood as its basic condition of existence.

When we inquire 'what the source of this subjectification is', this will lead us onto the general system of our era. Our era is defined as one of information and technology. Technology, will lead man to the causality he brings along, the mechanization/ automation and an 'alienation' demeanor against the world we live in. Modern art, when taken under consideration in a macro framework, is the expression of alienation. This sentiment of alienation for the mechanistic world is the source of the subjectification of new art. This sentiment of alienation, will naturally bring new art to search a world alternative to this causal, mechanist one. This quest, will reach its aim in human consciousness. Consciousness, liberal creation connote novelty. The only way, man can reach out to such a free world, away from causality and automation, is art, man can only be freed from becoming automation's sole satellite via art. Man is granted this salvation and independence by art, modern art. In this sense, modern art, is not only a human art, it also provides a liberated life to man.