

WANTED FOR MURDER

- A LOOSE REVIEW OF FILM AND PERFORMANCE ART IN THE LAST 100 YEARS



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Art, regardless of its pivotal role in society, has for most of its history been on the fringes of society. For some the function of art is merely to decorate and please, for others such as the German George Gross its purpose was to act as thorn in the flesh of society and bring about change.

Many libertarians would have it that the images we see, however violent, have little or no effect on us, and scientific studies have been conducted which purport to back up this assertion, yet the reality is that companies, like governments, spend billions of pounds each year on advertising exactly because they know that we are susceptible to its influences. In many ways the function of art is to enhance our perception of the world around us, make us see it in new ways, to wonder at its marvels and to question or change its failings.

For decades artists have pursued and promoted the notion of anti-art, and lived under the illusion that they have brought about change- nothing could be further from the truth, however extreme the notion it has been embraced by the very establishment it pretends to destroy - and the judgments made on it, money/ gallery / fame are exactly the same as they always were. Artists go round boasting endless lists of exhibitions they have had and parade them like the self awarded medals worn by tin-pot dictators of banana republics. Likewise, many artists proffer the illusion that by embracing excess they are demonstrating the real world and thereby facilitating change.

Η τέχνη, ανεξάρτητα από τον κεντρικό ρόλο της στην κοινωνία, κατά το μεγαλύτερο μέρος της ιστορίας της ήταν στα περιθώρια της κοινωνίας. Για μερικούς η λειτουργία της τέχνης είναι μόνο να διακοσμήσει και για άλλους, όπως ο Γερμανός George Gross, ο σκοπός της ήταν να ενεργήσει ως αγκάθι στη σάρκα της κοινωνίας και να επιφέρει την αλλαγή.

Πολλοί φιλελεύθεροι θα έλεγαν ότι οι εικόνες που βλέπουμε, όσο βίαιες και να είναι, έχουν ελάχιστη ή καμία επίδραση σε μας, και επιστημονικές μελέτες έχουν πραγματοποιηθεί που υποστηρίζουν αυτόν τον ισχυρισμό, όμως η πραγματικότητα είναι ότι οι επιχειρήσεις, όπως τις κυβερνήσεις, ξοδεύουν δισεκατομμύρια λίρες κάθε χρόνο στη διαφήμιση ακριβώς επειδή ξέρουν ότι είμαστε ευαίσθητοι στις επιρροές της. Από πολλές απόψεις η λειτουργία της τέχνης είναι να ενισχύσει την αντίληψή μας για τον κόσμο γύρω από μας, να μας κάνει να τον δούμε με νέους τρόπους, να εκπλαγούμε για τα θαύματά της και να εξετάσουμε ή να αλλάξουμε τις αποτυχίες της. Για δεκαετίες οι καλλιτέχνες έχουν ακολουθήσει και προωθήσει την έννοια της αντι-τέχνης, και ζουν με την ψευδαισθητική ότι έχουν επιφέρει την αλλαγή. Τίποτα δεν είναι περισσότερο αναληθές από αυτό - όσο ακραία και να είναι η έννοια, έχει αγκαλιαστεί από το ίδιο το κατεστημένο που προσποιείται ότι θα καταστρέψει και οι αποφάσεις που παίρνονται για αυτήν, χρήματα/ γκαλερί/ φήμη, είναι ακριβώς οι ίδιες όπως ήταν πάντα. Οι καλλιτέχνες τριγυρίζουν με ατελείωτους

Sanat, toplumdaki kilit rolüne bakılmaksızın, tarih boyunca toplumun uçlarında yer almıştır. Bazılarına göre sanatın yalnızca dekoratif ve mutlu etme işlevi vardır. Alman George Gross gibi insanlar için ise sanatın toplumda ele batan bir diken gibi olması ve değişimi getirmesi gerekir.

Birçok özgürlükçüye göre gördüğümüz resimler ne kadar şiddet içerseler de, üzerimizde çok az etki hatta hiç etkileri yoktur. Yapılan bilimsel çalışmalar da bu yönde bilgiler ortaya koymaktadırlar. Ancak gerçek şudur ki şirketler, tıpkı hükümetler gibi, reklamdan etkilendiğimizi bildiklerinden her yıl bu alana milyarlarca poundluk yatırım yapıyorlar. Birçok yönden sanatın işlevi dünyaya bakışımızı geliştirmek, onu yeni ve farklı şekilde görebilmemizi sağlamak, mucizeleri üzerinde düşünmemizi ve yanlış yanlarını sorgulamamızı ya da değiştirmemizi sağlamaktır.

Yıllar boyunca sanatçılar anti-sanat kavramını savundular ve değişimi getirdikleri yanılgısı içinde yaşadılar (yıkılmak istediği yapı tarafından kucaklanan kavram ne kadar uçlarda olursa olsun gerçekten daha ötesi olamaz) ve onunla ilgili yağılara varıldı. Para/galeri /şöhrette ise değişim hiçbirşey yok; her zaman oldukları gibiler. Sanatçılar yaptıkları sergilerin listesiyle dolaşip kendi kendilerine verdikleri madalyaları giyen muz cumhuriyeti diktatörleri gibi böbürlenirler. Bunun yanında birçok sanatçı aşırılığı kullanarak gerçek dünyayı ortaya koydukları ve



Unfortunately very often this is not the case, the notorious performance artist Otto Muehl was doing little more than engaging in his own sado-masochistic sexual gratification where in the end in his commune it was still the tall beautiful slim people who held sway - no fundamental structural rules had been changed- the short, fat, and plain were left out of the equation.

If you look at catalogues of many contemporary performance artists, it seems that nudity and sexuality and chunks of meat are de rigueur - but what are they making us question? Most feature young beautiful bodies. The British Artist Jemima Stehli in the late 90's made a feature of her body in a series entitled Strip in which she photographed herself stripping off in front of notable male art curators, gallery owners or critics. I wonder will she do the same when she's in her 70's and would she have done this if she were grossly overweight, and will it evoke the same response? In many instances conventions are not being questioned nor are boundaries broken they are in fact re-enforcing pre existing but subtly all pervasive stereotypes.

If boundaries had truly been challenged in the past hundred years or so then I am certain that by writing the words: dwarf, big nose, short-arse, fat lump you would not be sniggering or wincing now as you read these words. Compare them to the following words: tall, beautiful, handsome, and you can immediately see what I mean.



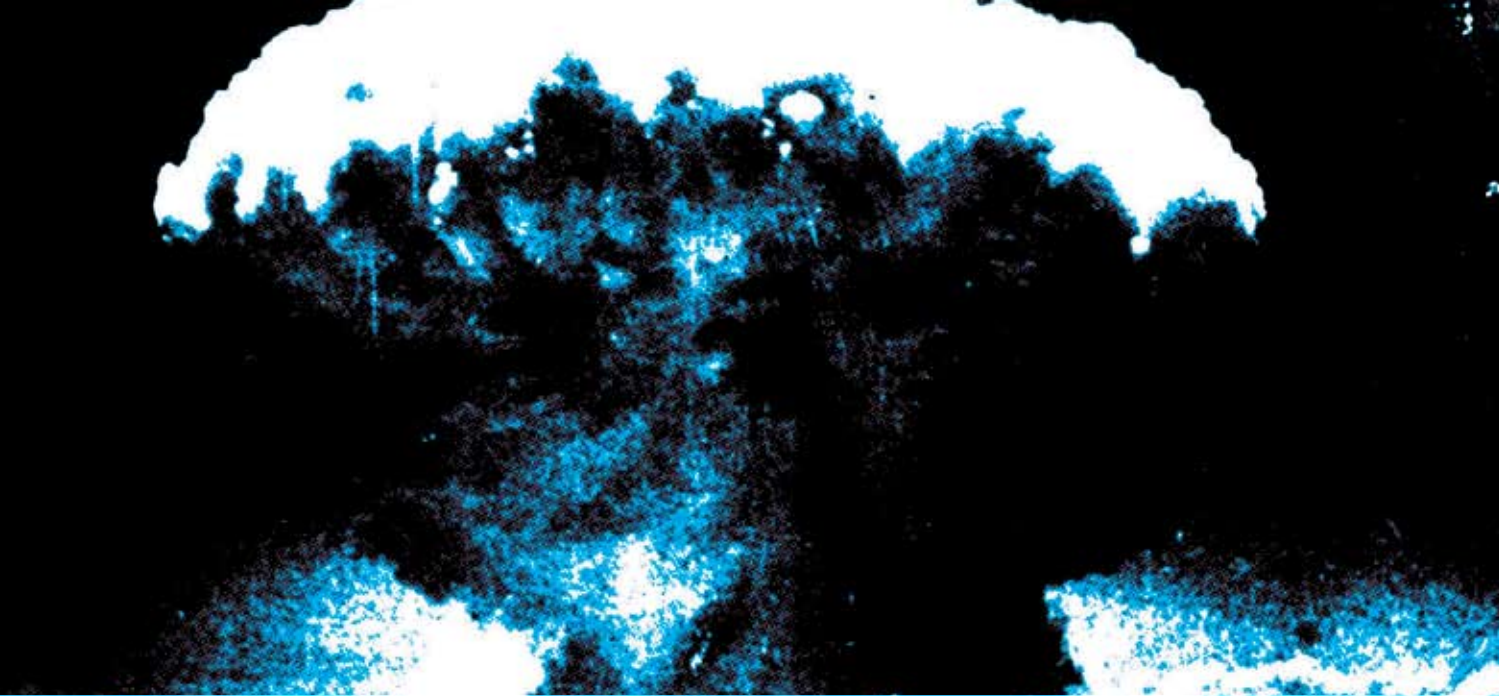
καταλόγους εκθέσεων στις οποίες συμμετείχαν και τους παρουσιάζουν όπως τα αυτο-απονεμημένα μετάλλια που φοριούνται από τους ευτελείς δικτάτορες σε δημοκρατίες-μπανανίες. Επιπλέον, πολλοί καλλιτέχνες έχουν την παραίσθηση ότι αγκαλιάζοντας την υπερβολή θα υποδείξουν τον πραγματικό κόσμο και με αυτό τον τρόπο θα διευκολύνουν την αλλαγή. Δυστυχώς κάτι τέτοιο, συνήθως, δεν ισχύει. Ο διαβόητος καλλιτέχνης Otto Muehl γοήτευε με τη σαδομαζοχιστική σεξουαλική ικανοποίησή του αλλά τελικά στην κοινότητα του κυριάρχησαν οι ψηλοί, ωραίοι και λεπτοί άνθρωποι - κανένας από τους θεμελιώδεις θεσμικούς κανόνες δεν αλλάχθηκε - οι κοντοί, χοντροί και απλοί έμειναν εκτός.

Αν κοιτάξετε σε καταλόγους πολλών σύγχρονων καλλιτεχνών θα δείτε ότι το γυμνό, η σεξουαλικότητα και κομμάτια κρέατος είναι απαραίτητα - αλλά τι μας κάνουν να αναρωτηθούμε; Οι περισσότεροι παρουσιάζουν ωραία νεανικά σώματα. Η βρετανίδα καλλιτέχνης Jemima Stehli στα τέλη της δεκαετίας του '90 έκανε μια παρουσίαση του σώματος της σε μια σειρά με τίτλο Strip, στην οποία φωτογράφησε τον εαυτό της να γδύνεται μπροστά από διάφορους γνωστούς ιδιοκτήτες γκαλερί και κριτικούς. Διερωτώμαι αν θα κάνει το ίδιο όταν θα είναι 70 χρονών και αν θα το έκανε αν ήταν υπέρβαρη, και αν θα προκαλούσε τις ίδιες αντιδράσεις; Σε πολλές περιπτώσεις οι τύποι δεν εξετάζονται, ούτε σπάζουν τα όρια, στην πραγματικότητα επιβάλλουν ξανά με λεπτότητα όλα τα ήδη υπάρχοντα και κυρίαρχα στερεότυπα.

böylelikle değişimi getirdikleri ilüzyonunu sunarlar. Ne yazık ki genelde durum böyle değildir. Ünlü sahne sanatçısı Otto Muehl kendi sado-mazoüst tatminine uğraşmaktan fazlasını yapmıyordu ve sonunda da kendi komünü içinde hakim olan yine uzun boylu ve güzel insanlar oldu. Herhangi bir temel yapısal kural değişmemiştir; kısa boylu, şişman, sıradan insanlar denklemin dışında kalmıştır.

Birçok çağdaş sahne sanatçısının kataloğuna bakarsanız çıplaklık, seks ve vücudun moda olduğunu görürsünüz. Peki bunlar bizlerin neyi sorgulamasını sağlıyor? Çoğunda genç ve güzel bedenleri görüyoruz. İngiliz sanatçı Jemima Stehli 1990'ların sonunda Strip adlı çalışmasında kendi bedenini kullandı ve farklı erkek küratör, galeri sahibi ve eleştirmenin önünde çırılçıplak soyunarak kendi kendini resimledi. Merak ediyorum da aceba kendisi 70 yaşına geldiğinde ya da aşırı kilolu olsaydı aynı şeyi yapar mıydı ya da aynı tepkiyi alır mıydı? Birçok durumda ne gelenekler sorgulanıyor ne de sınırlar yıkılıyor. Aslında yaptıkları önceden varolanları ve yaygın olan kalıpları güçlendirmek oluyor.

Eğer geçtiğimiz yüzyıl içinde sınırlara meydan okunmuş olsaydı cüce, koca burun, bodur, tıknaz gibi kelimeleri okurken büyük altından gülmez ya da yüzünüzü buruşturmazdınız. Şimdi bu kelimeleri şunlarla karşılaştırın: uzun boylu, güzel, yakışıklı. Şimdi ne demek istediğimi anlıyorsunuz sanırım.



It is said that we make a judgment on one another in less than 100 milliseconds- at the core of that judgment are all the prejudices of biology and social conditioning. And according to how we are born, is how we are judged for all our lives, not primarily by our actions but by our outward appearance. Few have sought to address these issues, flagrant sexuality, sado-masochism, or rampant homosexuality are far more spectacular! Women speak of women's rights as if they are a homogeneous whole - they are not! Subtle prejudice against appearance or age (regardless of race or creed) is rarely addressed. The same is true when one looks at Racism. We love to look down on each other.

In the 70's I saw an experimental film entitled Death Camp it lasted about 5 minutes and featured text from a book about Belsen. Horrific events. These were inter-cut with a close up view of a hand holding a blade and simply cutting through a hang nail on a finger. There was a small amount of blood- the wincing of the viewer came with the cutting of the hangnail, not with the larger scale reportage of mans inhumanity to man. This underscored Stalin's statement that one mans death was a tragedy, a thousand deaths but a mere statistic. What was the pilot who dropped the bomb on Hiroshima thinking about when he did it? The enormity of his act, the itch on his bum, or what he was going to eat that night?

Αν τα όρια είχαν πραγματικά προκληθεί στα προηγούμενα εκατό περίπου χρόνια τότε είμαι σίγουρος ότι γράφοντας τις λέξεις: νάνος, μυταράς, χαμηλόκωλος, κοντρός, δεν θα κρυφογελοούσατε ενώ τις διαβάζετε. Συγκρίνεται τις με τις ακόλουθες λέξεις: ψηλός, όμορφος, ωραίος, και αμέσως θα καταλάβετε τι εννοώ. Λέγεται ότι κρίνουμε ο ένας τον άλλο μέσα σε λιγότερο από 100 κιλιοστά του δευτερολέπτου – στον πυρήνα αυτής της κρίσης βρίσκονται όλες οι προκαταλήψεις της βιολογικής και κοινωνικής ρύθμισης. Και σύμφωνα με το πώς γεννιόμαστε, κρίνουμε σε όλη τη ζωή μας, όχι πρώτιστα από τις ενέργειες μας αλλά από την εξωτερική μας εμφάνιση. Λίγοι έχουν επιδιώξει να αντιμετωπίσουν αυτά τα ζητήματα. Η κατάφωρη σεξουαλικότητα, ο σαδομαζοχισμός, ή η ασυγκράτητη ομοφυλοφιλία είναι πολύ πιο θεαματικά! Οι γυναίκες μιλούν για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών σαν να είναι ένα ομοιογενές σύνολο – δεν είναι! Η λεπτή προκατάληψη ενάντια στην εμφάνιση ή ηλικία (ανεξαρτήτως φυλής ή θρησκείας) εξετάζεται σπάνια. Το ίδιο ισχύει όταν εξετάζουμε τον ρατσισμό. Λατρεύουμε να κοιτάζουμε τον άλλο αφ' υψηλού.

Τη δεκαετία του '70 είδα μια πειραματική ταινία με τίτλο Death Camp που διάρκεσε 5 λεπτά και παρουσίαζε κείμενο από ένα βιβλίο για το Belsen. Φρικιαστικά γεγονότα. Συμπεριλάμβαναν κοντινά πλάνα ενός χεριού που κρατάει μια λεπίδα και κόβει το δέρμα δίπλα στο νύχι.. Έτρεξε λίγο αίμα - ο μορφασμός του θεατή ήρθε με το κόψιμο ενός νυχιού και όχι με τη απανθρωπιά. Αυτό υπογράμμισε τη δήλωση του Στάλιν ότι ένας θάνατος είναι τραγωδία, χίλιοι θάνατοι είναι μια απλή στατιστική.

Birbirimiz hakkında 100 milisaniyede yargıya vardığımız söylenir ve bu vardığımız yargıların altında yatan da biyolojik ve sosyal koşullanmaların oluşturduğu önyargılardır. Tüm yaşamımız boyunca nasıl doğuyorsak o şekilde yargılanırız, hareketlerimiz ya da görünüşümüze göre değil. Az sayıda insan bu sorunlara eğildi ancak seksüellik, sadomazoşizm ve homoseksüellik çok daha ilgi çekiciydi! Kadınlar homojen bir bütünlük gibi kadın haklarından bahsederler, ama değildirler! Dış görünüş veya yaşla (ırk ya da inançlara bakılmaksızın) ilgili sessiz sakin önyargılara çözüm bulunmaya çalışılmaz. Aynı şey ırkçılık için de geçerlidir. Birbirimize tepeden bakmaya bayılırız. 1970'lerde deneysel bir film olan Death Camp (Ölüm Kampı) filmini seyretmiştim. 5 dakikalık bir filmdi Belsen hakkında bir kitaptan bir kısım içeriyordu. Dehşet verici olaylardı bunlar. Görüntü arada bir bıçak tutan bir el ve parmağın üzerindeki tırnağı kesişini yakın çekimle gösteren bir başka görüntüyle kesiliyordu. Görüntüde çok az kan vardı. İnsanlar ise insanın insana yaptığı insanlıkdışı hareketle ilgili röportajla değil asılı tırnağın keşilmesiyle izleyici yüzünü buruşturdu. Bu Stalin'in bir sözünü hatırlattı: bir adamın ölümü trajedi, bin adamın ölümü ise yalnızca istatistikî bilgidir. Hiroşima'ya bombayı atan pilot bunu yaparken ne düşünüyordu acaba? Yaptığının büyüklüğünü, kışındaki kaşını hissinin yoksa akşama ne yiyeceğini mi?

The reality when I go to an exhibition however good, is that I am far more interested in those around me, the beautiful girl on the other side of the room, how I look and feel, what I'm going to do the following day. The same happens with virtually everything I do- for all of us it's a me centered existence- something we all go to great lengths to disguise. At this point I can feel the net curtains twitching all the more as the veiled figure quickly darts behind the window.

The past century has seen the advent of wonderful new and potent technologies. Art has moved away from mere 2 dimensional representations, it now encompasses a wide range of media from computer generated imagery to live performances. But we should not be seduced by these technological marvels - the underlying issues are still the same and always will be. Painting beautiful pictures, or depicting a perfect life is as way off the mark as art on the other extreme - neither really deals with the subtleties of us as we are, as we see and respond to each other - both extremes are in effect fabrications and if art is to effect lasting change it is these subtleties that it needs to address.

Τι σκεφτόταν ο πιλότος που έριξε τη βόμβα στη Χιροσίμα; Το μέγεθος της πράξης του, τη φαγούρα στον πισινό του ή τι θα έτρωγε για δείπνο; Η αλήθεια, όταν πηγαίνα σε μια έκθεση, όσο καλή και να είναι αυτή, είναι ότι ενδιαφερόμαι περισσότερο για αυτούς γύρω μου, την ωραία κοπέλα στην άλλη πλευρά της αίθουσας, το πώς είμαι και πώς νοιώθω, το τι θα κάνω την επόμενη μέρα. Το ίδιο συμβαίνει με σχεδόν οτιδήποτε κάνω – για όλους μας είναι μια εγωκεντρική ύπαρξη – κάτι που όλοι μας πασιζουμε να κρύψουμε. Σε αυτό το σημείο νοιώθω τις κουρτίνες να τραβιούνται όλο και περισσότερο ενώ η πεπλοφόρα φηγούρα τρέχει πίσω από το παράθυρο.

Ο προηγούμενος αιώνας έχει δει την εμφάνιση θαυμάσιων νέων και ισχυρών τεχνολογιών. Η τέχνη έχει απομακρυνθεί από δυδιάστατες αντιπροσωπεύσεις, καλύπτει τώρα ένα ευρύ φάσμα μέσων από εικόνες δημιουργημένες στους υπολογιστές μέχρι ζωντανές παραστάσεις. Αλλά δεν πρέπει να παραπλανηθούμε από αυτά τα τεχνολογικά θαύματα - τα ελλοχεύοντα ζητήματα είναι ακόμα τα ίδια και πάντα θα είναι. Η ζωγραφική όμορφων εικόνων ή η απεικόνιση μιας τέλει ζωής είναι τόσο εκτός θέματος όσο είναι και η τέχνη στο άλλο άκρο, καμιά δεν εξετάζει πραγματικά τις οξύνειες μας, όπως βλέπουμε και αντιδρούμε ο ένας στον άλλο. Και τα δύο άκρα είναι, βασικά, κατασκευάσματα και εάν η τέχνη θα αλλάξει πραγματικά κάτι, είναι αυτές τις οξύνειες που πρέπει να εξετάσει.

"BUT WE SHOULD NOT BE SEDUCED BY THESE TECHNOLOGICAL MARVELS- THE UNDERLYING ISSUES ARE STILL THE SAME AND ALWAYS WILL BE"



Bir sergideyken, sergi ne kadar iyi olursa olsun benim ilgilendiğim şey etrafımdakiler, nasıl görüldüğüm, odanın diğer ucundaki güzel kız, nasıl görüldüğüm ve hissettiğim ve yarın ne yapacağımıdır. Bu yaptığım herşey için geçerlidir. Hepimiz ben merkezli yaklaşırız ve bunu saklamak için de çok çaba harcarız. Bu noktada perdelerin daha da hareketlendiğini ve örtülü olan şeklin pencerenin dışında hareketlendiğini hissedebiliyim.

Geçtiğimiz yüzyılda inanılmaz ve etkili teknolojilerin keşfi gerçekleşti. Sanat ise sadece 2 boyutlu bir yansıma olmaktan çıktı. Şimdilerde ise sanat birçok şekilde ortaya konuluyor; bilgisayarla üretilmiş resimlerden tutun da canlı performanslara kadar.