

AN ESSAY TO SHOW THE LINKS BETWEEN DADA/SURREALISM AND POP ART.

Art comes in a great variety. Different periods inspire different movements, reflected in the work of the artists. However some of these movements do have their linkages. By looking aspects such as stimulation and influences of these movements it seems clear to establish the fact that many periods are linked to each other, some more obviously than others.

Surrealism and Dada were the first chronologically out of the two. The first movement dated to the years of World War 1. After the war art in France split up into two styles. Both of the styles were linked to different ideas of ideologies. The first was Purism. Purism was the movement which promoted the idea that we should 'return to order' in both art and society. This was reflected in the works of artists which used Purism in their work. Purism as a whole rejected the more extreme work of the abstraction of cubism. However, very controversially, the Purists work was actually closely related to Cubism, although it was distinctly clear that the Purists works were considerably closer to the actual form than the Cubists.

The Purists interests lay with the aesthetic qualities of machines. Despite the Purists' theoretical interest in machinery, the still-life's that they painted depicted more conventional, technologically unsophisticated subjects, as in Le Corbusier's Composition with Guitar and Lantern (1920, Kunstmuseum, Basel). Although the Purists' ideas made an important contribution to contemporary artistic debate, it was in the field of architecture that they had their longest-lasting influence. Purism's concern with primary forms, the "machine aesthetic", and functionalism is most clearly expressed in Le Corbusier's buildings of the late 1920s, such as the uniform residences at the Pessac housing estate (1926), near Bordeaux. Through such works the principles of Purism exerted a crucial influence on the development of architecture, long after Purist painting had become relegated to the status of an extinct artistic movement.

The second of the two styles was Surrealism which came directly out of Dada. Dada was in the era of the pre war western world. Dada was both an artistic and literary movement but the particular aspect of interest is the artistic. Dada was a movement reflecting the widespread nihilistic protest against all aspects of Western culture, especially against militarism during and after World War I. The word Dada is very different considering the names of other movements are very self explanatory, for example Surrealism is a movement involving surrealist ideas and the bizarreness of the unconscious mind. Dadaism cannot be traced in this way as the origins of the name are unclear. It is thought that the name was selected at random from the dictionary, as the

word Dada is French for hobbyhorse, selected by the Romanian-born poet, essayist, and editor Tristan Tzara.

Dada was originated in 1916 by Tzara, the German writer Hugo Ball, the Alsatian-born artist Jean Arp, and other intellectuals living in Zurich, Switzerland. A similar revolt against conventional art occurred simultaneously in New York, where it was led by Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp, and Francis Picabia, and in Paris, where it became the inspiration for the Surrealist movement. After World War I the Dadaist movement spread to Germany, and many of the Zurich group joined French Dadaists in Paris. The Paris group disintegrated in 1922.

In their efforts to express the negation of all current aesthetic and social values, the Dadaists frequently used artistic and literary methods that were deliberately incomprehensible. Dada as a movement declined in the 1920s, and some of its practitioners became prominent in other modern-art movements, notably Surrealism. During the mid-1950s an interest in Dada was revived in New York among composers, writers, and artists, who produced many works with Dadaist features. The best known of the many artists and writers associated with Dada was Marcel Duchamp, who invented the "ready-made", a mass-produced object that he chose almost at random and designated as sculpture. The most notorious ready-made was a urinal that he entitled *Fontaine*, which he exhibited in New York in 1917. Other artists involved with Dada were the Frenchmen Jean Arp and Francis Picabia, the American Man Ray, and the German-born artists George Grosz and Max Ernst.

Surrealism was a more psychological movement. Sigmund Freud's ideas of the subconscious inspired Surrealists to experiment with creative processes that would unlock the unconscious, the Id, *(in the theory of psychoanalysis, one of the three basic elements of personality, the others being the ego and the superego. The id can be equated with the unconscious of common usage, which is the reservoir of the instinctual drives of the individual—biological urges, wishes, and affective motives. The id is dominated by the pleasure principle, through which the individual is pressed for immediate gratification of desires. According to the theory of Sigmund Freud, the energy behind the instinctual drives of the id is known as the libido—a generalized force which is basically sexual in nature—through which the sexual and psychosexual nature of the individual finds expression.)* freed from the repression of civilizing Ego and the moralizing force of the Superego. However these ideas were not shared by all the artists involved in the Surrealist movement which in itself was to say the least confusing and contradictory. Like Dadaism, Surrealism emphasized the role of the unconscious in creative activity, but it employed the psychic unconscious in a more orderly and more serious manner.

In painting and sculpture Surrealism is one of the leading influences on art in the 20th century. It claimed as its ancestors in the fine arts such painters as the Italian Paolo Uccello, the British poet and artist William Blake, and the Frenchman Odilon Redon. In this century it also admired, and included in its exhibitions, works by the Italian Giorgio de Chirico, the Russian Marc Chagall, the Swiss Paul Klee, the French artists Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia, and the Spaniard Pablo Picasso, none of whom was ever a member of the Surrealist group. From 1924 the German Max Ernst, the Frenchman Jean Arp, and the American painter and photographer Man Ray were among its members. They were joined for a short time around 1925 by the Frenchman André Masson and the Spaniard Joan Miró, who remained members for some time but were too individualistic as painters to submit to the strong leadership of André Breton, who exercised final authority over the movement.

(SEE PICTURE 1)

Salvador Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory* (1931) ranks as one of the most famous paintings of the 20th century. A surrealist, Dalí referred to his work as "hand-painted dream photographs", and claimed that his imagery often came directly from his own dreams. The strange form in this painting's foreground, however, is based on an image from Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (c. 1505-1510). Assemblages would be constructed from bizarre combinations of images and objects isolated from the origins of everyday life; elevated to the world of Surrealism. Essentially like when Frances split up into two styles, so did Surrealism. Essentially there were two kinds of painting at this time in Surrealism. The first was based on the dream concept, it utilised conventional landscape perspective as did Salvador Dalí in this painting, other artist who fitted into these groups were artists like Yves Tanguy (1900-55) and René Magritte (1898-1967)

Yves Tanguy painted paintings of strange and fantastic bones and amoeba like shapes, arranged in flat, lifeless, imaginary landscapes, quickly won recognition. Although these images belonged to a haunted dream world, his figures were smoothly painted in clear colours with painstaking detail.

(SEE PICTURE 2)

Son of Man (1964) by René Magritte juxtaposes images that the artist used many times in different combinations. The apple, the wall, and the anonymous bowler-hatted man are intended to be viewed as unrelated elements. Magritte's work was not intended to be symbolic but was closer to the inexplicable quality of dreams, and the work of the Surrealist painters. The other type of Surrealism employed more experimental new techniques of collage and 'automatism', an action that does not involve much thought or basis, to create random encounters by bizarre juxtaposition. Overall the move of surrealism was short lived, but it had a great influence on other artists, most notably Paul Nash who painted war paintings visibly influenced by the Italian

Surrealism. Its influence also pervaded into popular culture or Pop Art as we know it now.

Pop Art was an art movement around the 1950's and 60's. Pop Arts' images were taken from the mass culture of those times. Objects included beer bottles, soup cans, comic strips, road signs, and similar objects in paintings, collages, and sculptures. Others incorporated the objects themselves into their paintings or sculptures, sometimes in startlingly modified form. The link between Pop art and Surrealism/Dadaism is simple yet complex at the same time. Dada's irrelevant and iconistic attitude, as well as its willingness to accept almost anything into the realm of art, certainly aided the development of Pop Art as without the free conceptions of Art brought to life by Dadaism Pop Art would have almost certainly been rejected. Pop Artists also adapted techniques popular to the Dadaist. Collage is a great example of this, which was extended in the twenties to its photographic partner, montages. Both Dadaism and Surrealism had a strong interest in desire and fantasy, both of these featured strongly in Pop Art. Both Dadaism and Surrealism were strong enough to even carry on through Pop Art. Dada and Surrealism made their way in Pop Art by the work of Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg in the fifties. Johns focused on 'things which are seen and not looked at.' as he told the curator Walter Hopps in an interview in 1965. These things often came in simple shapes such as circles (targets) and rectangles (flags numbers and letters.) (SEE PICTURE 3), promoting the Surrealists ideas of thought provoking pictures, but overall Pop Art was more commercial than that of Surrealism, this commercial ness reflected in Andy Warhols' emphasis on brand named products, abundantly evident in the silkscreen '200 Campbell's Soup Cans' (SEE PICTURE 4 FOR AN EXTRACT)

Through the sixties, several Pop artists continued Dada and Surrealist practices, although on a much smaller scale to the previous year. Jim Dine's presentation of tools across the top of a canvas in 'Five Feet of Colorful Tools' directly echoes the use of ready made materials by Duchamp. His "ready-mades" consisted simply of everyday objects, such as a urinal and a bottle rack. His Bicycle Wheel, an early example of kinetic art (a form of art, usually sculpture, in which movement is an integral part), was mounted on a kitchen stool. Another example of Pop Art tracing back to Surrealism and Dada is Claes Oldenburg. Claes Oldenburg demolished expectations with his works of art throughout the Pop era. He made small objects unusually large, for example 'Trowel' (SEE PICTURE 5), or hard materials soft, 'Soft Drainpipe - Blue (Cool) Version. This harks back Salvador Dali's infatuation with dramatic shift in scale and fondness for softness in the thirties. This belief in transforming vision to force awareness of the unseen or the overseen also finds its resonance in Surrealism.

Overall to conclude we can see that Art could not exist without some kind of influence. As Sigmund Freud said,

'There is no such thing as a random thought, although some thoughts may seem unlinked, in the wider picture they are inspired'

Therefore this proves that different moments in art can be and are linked in some way as inspiration is needed for an idea whether negative or positive. An idea can be inspired negatively for example, to be inspired to change the way someone does something. Pop art was like this as the movement itself, however, began as a reaction against the Abstract Expressionist style of the 1940s and 1950s, which the Pop Artists considered over-intellectual, subjective, and divorced from reality. Adopting the aim of the American composer John Cage—to close the gap between life and art—Pop Artists embraced the environment of everyday life. Pop art was the inspiration of artists to take a different perspective on surrealism, to take a more random commercial and powerful approach.

The greatest link between Pop Art and Surrealism/Dada is the aims of artists. Pop artists aimed to be impersonal—that is, to allow the viewer to respond directly to the object, rather than to the skill and personality of the artist. Surrealists aimed to create images inspired by the unconscious to unlock the unconscious. Both movements aimed to put meaning into their work by one way or another.

To conclude art is to inspire and to be inspired. Ideas are recycled and regurgitated over and over again. Links are obvious between some movements and less with others.