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Contemporary Art on a Socialist Canvas: The Repurposing of Urban Space through Street Art in Lodz, Poland

Johnson, Haley University of Central Oklahoma

The residents of Lodz, Poland, had once taken pride in the city’s large textile factories and industrial culture emerging in the late nineteenth century and continuing during socialist Poland, although wiring different political systems. After the fall of socialist Poland in 1989, many factories had fallen into disuse and the nineteenth century apartment buildings had been deteriorating due to the lack of findings. In the process of rebranding the image of the city, in the first decade of the twenty first century, old factories and other buildings were appropriated as a means of showcasing the new concept of Lodz, as an international Western tourist city. Through different forms of public and private funding, the Urban Forms Gallery established in 2009 created over twenty murals on the outer walls of deteriorating buildings in the city center as a way to showcase Lodz to the city’s visitors. This paper examines the murals within the framework of the city branding. The paper argues that the repurposing of buildings in Lodz, Poland created a thriving artistic space that not only captures the history of the city, but also its contemporary social problems of high unemployment and urban depopulation.

Cubano Polaco Americano: A Study on the Globalization of Socialist Cinematic Poster Art during the Cold War

Musgrove, Olivia University of Central Oklahoma

This study contributes to limited scholarly research on artistic exchange between socialist countries and the United States during the Cold War period, by examining socialist Cuban filmic poster art produced between the 1970s and the 2000s. These posters act as an example of the globalization of socialist art, usually understood within the framework of the Communist bloc. They are an interesting case to study, as Cuba is the only Latin American country with a government based on Marxist-Leninist principles. The material and stylistic choices for the posters were limited to Cuba’s contact with socialist countries in Europe due to the U.S. imposed trade embargo on Cuba. By examining Cuban cinematic poster art made for American films and comparing them with Polish cinematic poster art, I argue that the globalization of art not only imbues similarity, but also creates art unique to each society. First, I examine the Cold War era socioeconomic, political, and cultural situation in Cuba, with a particular emphasis on Cuba’s relationship with the US and the USSR, and the establishment of the state-sponsored aesthetic tradition in Cuba. I then conduct a semiotic examination of Cuban and Polish posters for the same American films, including Hitchcock’s Frenzy, Fosse’s Cabaret, C. Scott’s Rage, and Coppola’s The Godfather, to show how the posters of each society utilized culturally specific aesthetic language while retaining the same message of the f
Curiosity on the High Seas: The Curiosity Cabinet and the East India Marine Society

Ross, Lauren University of Central Oklahoma

The East India Marine Society was founded in Salem, Massachusetts in the year 1799. It was outlined in their statement of purpose that the society should 'form a Museum of natural and artificial curiosities.' This paper will discuss the Native American artworks which were donated to the East India Marine Society between the years of 1800 and 1850, and establish that the members of the East India Marine Society were active agents in contributing to the concept of the "Vanishing Race" within early to mid-19th century America. First, this paper will introduce the East India Marine Society and the tenets of their society. Second, the paper will approach the collection of the society as a curiosity cabinet, which reinforced and reproduced Anglo-Saxon ethnocentric views in 19th century America. By placing the Native tribes into this label of curiosity, the concept of the other flourished and the Native American became an idea that could be sold to popular culture. Third, the paper will address how the collection served to control and frame the Natives as a "vanishing race" through removing the artwork from the framework of Native American collective knowledge of symbolic meaning and interjecting the collector's interpretations. Therefore, by analyzing the provenance and the means of acquisition of these artworks, the study will discuss the curiosity cabinet as a visual rhetoric, which celebrated the collectors' place in justifying Western expansi

Beauty is in the Eye of the Media: Comparing Classical Ideals

Summers, Blair University of Central Oklahoma

Whether it is an appetite for voluptuous curves, cartoon-like eyes or beards of wisdom, all cultures construct the concept of ideal beauty, which in turn shapes human behavior. Ancient Greece is infamous for its innovative vision of ideal beauty achieved through symmetry and exaggeration of the male human body during the Classical Period. Comparatively, today's media in the United States incessantly promotes photoshopped images of male bodies, such as Ryan Gosling and Zac Efron, to simultaneously advocate athletic musculature and a thin physique. This paper compares the ideology beyond the concept of male beauty in Classical Greece and contemporary U.S. to argue that in both societies, the constructed male beauty standard generated societal pressures to achieve the culturally-defined form of perfection. The paper utilizes historical, art historical, and social research on the concept of beauty in each society. First, this paper will discuss today's idealized body imagery portrayed by media and visual culture in the United States. Second, the cultural context and techniques used by artists in Classical Greece to define perfection will be discussed. Finally, the paper will consider the ways in which men sought to achieve the culturally-imposed ideal body in each society. While Classical Greece and contemporary U.S. represent unique social, political and religious lifestyles, their concepts of male beauty produced similar behaviors to attain the preferred standard.
03.01.05 Racism and the Stereotype of Mexican-Americans in the United States

Higuchi, Elsa University of Central Oklahoma

This research examines the depiction of Mexicans in visual culture in the United States at four historical moments: the Mexican-American war, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Bracero Program of the 1940s, and in the contemporary period. At each historical moment, the study discusses political and economic events that caused the stereotyping of Mexicans in public media. The major argument is that the stereotyping of Mexicans reflects the political relationship between the United States and Mexico. Whether Mexicans are forced out of the United States or are needed to work under exploited conditions, they are always stereotyped as the immigrant Other in American culture. By deconstructing the negative stereotypes, this study contributes knowledge about Mexican culture in the United States too often omitted from the history textbooks used in public schools.

03.01.06 Kabuki and Dumb Type

Adams, Joanne University of Central Oklahoma

The artist collective known as Dumb Type was created in Japan in 1984. Its members comprise people from many creative disciplines. This paper compares and contrasts Dumb Type’s OR and S/N performances with the more traditional Kabuki performances like Sugawara Denju Tenarai Kagami and Benten Kozo. The comparison is focused on the symbolism of the body in life and death. This paper argues that although Dumb Type prides itself as being a global performance group, it continues to represent traditional Japanese ideas of the body found in Kabuki shows. Dumb Type functions within Japanese traditional feelings about life and death. Thus, Dumb Type may be seen as important locally and globally. First, the characteristics of both Dumb Type and Kabuki performances referenced above are described. Second, the theme of life of the body in these performance styles, and how that relates to both traditional and modern Japan is discussed. Third, death of the body is explored using theatrical devices and how those relate to the Japanese perception of death. Both life and death themes regarding the body are expressed through the movements of the performers and the speed of the music and actions. My understandings on how death is perceived in Japan on the writings of the anthropologist Susan Long, who researches the opinion of the dying and deceased in different countries. Finally, I compiled articles relevant to Japanese performance art and the prominence of Kabuki in relation to the bod
More Than One Kind of Family: Representations of Same-Sex Couples, and Their Families, in Modern Commercial Advertising

Barlow, Mattie University of Central Oklahoma

No one can escape the reach of commercial advertising. Cable subscribers and YouTube fanatics both must succumb to ads before indulging in the newest prime time show or latest viral sensation. Commercials for home loans, aspirin and even crackers share something common—they use family as a way to relate their product to the viewer. Until now, the “American dream”, in relationship to the family, has been visualized as a mother, a father and a child so consumerism in the media has reflected society’s “traditional” concept of family. This paper argues that a vast number of our modern society acquires their ideas of social norms through mass media and to exclude a specific group of people dehumanizes them. More specifically, some modern marketing campaigns reflect a more inclusive idea of the American family, representing homosexual couples and their families as consumers, while utilizing the same emotional branding approach and family values of the past. First, this paper will discuss how commercial advertising appeals to the nation’s collective cultural identity by depicting social forms of identities to sell products. Second, this paper will examine the recent Tylenol marketing campaign, #HowWeFamily, Wells Fargo’s #WhyIWork and Honey Maid’s #ThisIsWholesome—to exhibit how they respond to the modern diverse family, including homosexual and heterosexual family units, and thereby reinforce the new concept of family in

DOMÉNIKOS THEOTOKÓPOULOS: LOST WORKS OF EL GRECO

Shiraiwa, Shikoh University of Central Oklahoma

University of Central Oklahoma, College of Fine Arts and Design houses two paintings from the Studio of El Greco, St Thomas and St. Paul, as part of the Melton Legacy Collection. Those paintings were supposedly executed during the final period of El Greco’s life (about 1600 to 1614). The paintings done by El Greco during those years can be examined as the collaboration with his son Jorge Manuel and other assistants. Provenance of St Thomas and St. Paul was stopped since the last owner, John Levy Gallery in New York City in 1930s. The authenticity of many of El Greco’s artworks caused several disagreements among art historians and other scholars. St. Thomas and St. Paul are not exempt from this debate as Jose Gudiol and Harold E. Wethey argued for the authenticity of the two paintings. First, this research project is to explore the significance of El Greco in Spanish art national identity and in the modern Western art identity through the painter’s multicultural background, and also to explore his works that reflected the sociocultural phenomena of Spain at the time. Second, I will introduce both the arguments for and against St. Thomas and St. Paul of the Melton Legacy Collection being painted by El Greco himself or by his assistant/s. In my conclusion, I will reintroduce the lost works of the Studio of El Greco, St. Thomas and St. Paul to complete the history of ownership following the 1930s. I will also argue my conclusion of the authenticity of the two pa
03.01.09 CAMEROON GRASSLANDS ART: DEVELOPMENT OF ART EDUCATION LESSON PLAN

Shiraiwa, Shikoh University of Central Oklahoma

The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) houses a significant collection of African Art from various cultures and societies, including Cameroon Grasslands Art. This research project is divided into three sections, Tsesah mask, the authenticity of UCO Tsesah mask, and art lesson plan development. First, I research a Tsesah mask from the Batcham society in the framework of social, cultural, religious, and political institutions at the time of its creation. A Tsesah mask is rare and recognized as one of the most distinct masterpieces of African art. Second, I focus on the UCO’s Tsesah mask by examining the authenticity, provenance and publication. Third, with my research on the Tsesah mask, I developed a university level art education lesson plan for the Cameroon Grasslands Art including Kwifo, Kuosi, and Batcham cultures. This lesson plan followed the UCO’s transformative learning values by including research (diversity, knowledge and understanding), art making (creativity and psychomotor skills), and presentation (leadership and application). The lesson plan was created for students to familiarize themselves with the UCO African Art Collection by exploring the sophisticated nature of Kwifo, Kuosi, and Batcham cultures and their art-making practice, which art objects reproduce the social power and privilege. This lesson plan was taught during the summer session in 2015, and its outcome is being evaluated through students’ final art products and presentations.

03.01.10 Socialist and Catholic National Narratives and the Exclusion of the Other

Musgrove, Olivia University of Central Oklahoma

Pac, Teresa University of Central Oklahoma

Barlow, Mattie University of Central Oklahoma

This research is concerned with a semiotic reading of the major saints in contemporary Poland. Because an artwork function within larger cultural systems, this study incorporates saint vitae and records of popular devotional practices of the period in order to demonstrate that each image is a sophisticated structure of overlapping meanings. As fictional characters, saints participate in a variety of discourses as they promote Polish Catholic national narrative to force Poland into the Western sphere of influences; advocate Catholic behavior and gender ideals; and obscure the history of non-Catholic religious groups in medieval and contemporary Poland. This exclusively Catholic linear narrative denies historical dynamic, diminishes the historical link between Poland and Russia, and reinforces the existing negative image of Russia and its Orthodox Church among Poles. The study goes beyond traditional iconographic approach to religious art and the universal function of saints and focuses on saints as part of Polish cultural and political capitals that favor the Polish alliance with the West.
ISIS vs Santa Muerte: Analyzing the Commonalities Between Two Cultures Justifying Violence Via Religion

Click, Carolyn  
*University of Central Oklahoma*

At first glance, present-day Mexico appears to have little in common with ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). The former is officially Catholic, and the latter is formally Islamic. However, in each society, religion is used to justify crime under different historical circumstances. In Mexico, the cult of Santa Muerte provides an identity for the crime-ridden underworld of a society which experiences failing economy and the desperation of a people yearning for basic necessities. Criminals partake in drug trafficking, human sacrifices, and homicide under the blessing of Santa Muerte. Similarly, ISIS is a social construction that uses religion, in this case Islam, to justify violent deeds such as beheadings, crucifixions, and other forms of homicide, but within the framework of the nation state. This paper will argue that in each case religion generates similar tactics of violence. First, the paper provides a brief analysis of the rise of each movement due to economic and political crises in each society. Second, the paper will stress how both Santa Muerte and ISIS followers utilize culturally specific visual language to construct their identities through ceremonies, practices, iconography, and space. Third, the paper provides a semiotic analysis of images associated with the violence of each movement to demonstrate that they reflect internal and external societal problems. In each case, strict focus on religion beclouds the historical dynamics of a society in crisis.

Hungarian Nationalism and Youth Movements in the 20th Century

Click, Carolyn  
*University of Central Oklahoma*

The majority of societies endorse their own national values through various youth organizations. Countries such as The United States, Germany, Poland, or China support such youth movements. One of the most powerful examples of these youth organizations existed in 20th century Hungary. This paper examines the visual culture associated with three Hungarian youth organizations within the visual expression of their changing concept of nationalism in the 20th century. These groups include the Hungarian Scouts of 1912, the Young Pioneers of 1948, and the Freedom Fighters of the revolution of 1956. This paper argues that all three organizations mirror Hungary's changing notion of nationalism depending on what power held sway over the politics during their time of operation. Organizations such as the Scouts in Hungary were expected to be educated both culturally and politically. In the case of the Young Pioneers, the children were to reflect the ideals of the communist regime. The Freedom Fighters embodied a vie for liberation and acted as a protest against the occupying Russian forces. Nevertheless, the movements share similar visual language within their propaganda posters, magazine illustrations, postcards, photographs, ceremonies, badges, architecture, statues, uniforms, and other iconography. Each group constructs its identity through visual language parallel to the group's particular doctrine while reflecting the values of the dominating political regime of their ti
03.01.13 The Ideology of the West in the Writings on the Berlin Wall

Dill, Jeanie University of Central Oklahoma

Writing on the wall was a solution for reaching out to the masses using propaganda, which became an art form used to portray the political constructs of society, influencing society by its own agenda. When analyzing the graffiti on the Wall there are multiple connotations to consider. Historically, the Wall is a symbol of suppression that if discussed as a barrier to seclude East Germans from capitalism—which also resulted in many deaths—then all negative connotations are bound to hold true. However, the Wall was also Chairman Ulbricht’s attempt to secure the future of a socialist Germany, which granted East Germans job security in a functional society. Despite this, the Berlin Wall became the embodiment of Western ideals through graffiti, expressing a belief that could not accurately describe the state of the GDR. By studying the art, this research demonstrates the meaning of the Wall from the perspective of the German people. First, by conceiving the wall as a means to separate the East and West. Secondly, by establishing the political, social, and cultural significance of the Wall. The graffiti on the Wall conveys the West Germans’ superiority to socialist Germany, thereby demonstrating how West Germans internalized the ideology of the West. Thus the graffiti idealized capitalism by degrading socialist society as if one was clearly dominant to the other.

03.01.14 Student Transformative Learning Record (STLR) Melton Gallery Internship, Fall 2015-Spring 2016

Barlow, Mattie University of Central Oklahoma

Shiraiwa, Shikoh University of Central Oklahoma

The Melton Gallery Internship offers inter-disciplinary transformative learning opportunities to Museum Studies and Global Art and Visual Culture students through hands-on learning experiences. The work of this internship includes; 1) a research paper project on one of the artworks from the Melton Legacy Collection, 2) presenting research at Transformative Learning Conference, Oklahoma Research Day and submitting the paper to the Oklahoma Conference of Art Historians, 3) publishing opportunities including the art collections’ catalog project, 4) assisting with daily gallery operations and collection management including, but not limited to, assisting art exhibition preparation and hosting opening receptions.

03.01.15 Sexuality: Photography and Sculpture Expressing Sexual Identities in the Art World

Braggs, Aundria University of Central Oklahoma

Many Contemporary artist address the issue of sexuality, whether in performance art, photography, or other media. Some artist such as Robert Mapplethorpe, and Louise Bourgeois comment on sexuality in a way that could be viewed as pornographic or inappropriate. To what extent is sexually explicit imagery acceptable in contemporary art? How does each artist depict the “self” through their art? These are questions I will be exploring in these writings. I will not provide answers but information for the viewer to form an opinion for themselves. First, I will discuss the concept of sexuality in the United States, as a social construct, and what factors, such as religion, contribute to that concept. Second, I will discuss the controversy surrounding homosexuality and Sadomasochism. Third, I will talk about various artist who deal with these topics through their work. Keywords: Sexuality, Art, Robert Mapplethorpe, Louise Bourgeois, Homosexuality, Sadomasochism, Religion, United States
Yo Soy Chicana: Where Traditional Mexican Gender Roles & Feminism Intersect

Spence, Jenna
University of Central Oklahoma

The Chicano Movement arose in the 1960s among the highly energized climate of social change in the United States. It was predominately associated with the Mexican-American community and first generation immigrants. This paper will discuss the Chicano Movement and the Chicana Feminist Movement that was born from it. After introducing the concept of Chicana Feminism this paper will introduce and define the traditional gender roles within Mexican-American culture and the ways in which Las Chicanas fought to redefine themselves based on these roles and other social stereotypes. In conclusion, this paper will look at the Chicana Feminist artist, Ester Hernandez, and her piece Sun Mad as it pertains the plight and struggle of women within the Mexican-American community.

Art School Revolutions: The Bardizon School And A Comparison Of Unofficial Art Groups

Spence, Jenna
University of Central Oklahoma

This paper will present the Barbizon School of French landscape painting in comparison to the conservative French Academy painting of the early nineteenth-century; serving as a model for what can occur when the education of artist within an institution is heavily regulated. This paper will also discuss the Socialist Realism art of the Soviet Union and the counter-reaction of unofficial art groups that occurred in response to the oppressive and controlling governmental standards. Finally this paper will compare the concepts of artistic control that was present during both of these periods of art history; and, how, although different in degree, are vastly similar in the effects that they had on practicing artist that longed for creative freedom outside of academic and governmental standards.

Dinner Parties With The Dead: Aegean Bronze Age Tombs & Burial Practices

Spence, Jenna
University of Central Oklahoma

The way that societies chose to bury their dead not only tell us about the deceased themselves but also about those that buried them. During the Aegean Bronze Age mortuary practices such as tombs, their construction and the burial practices and rituals that surrounded them were highly unified. This paper will briefly examine the mortuary practices as they pertain to Aegean tomb, their construction and the methodology behind them, specifically in Mycenaean. After a proper understanding of Aegean tombs has been illustrated, mortuary practices such as the process of active burial, remains found during excavation and the rituals that surrounded this process will be discussed. Through careful dissection of mortuary practices during the Aegean Bronze Age a dichotomy between the world of the living and the world of the dead become increasingly evident. This separation of the world of now and that of the afterlife became a crucial element of mortuary practices and a defining characteristic of Aegean culture.
The Middle East, and especially its Islamic side, is the most photographed region in the contemporary world. In these photographs, often seen in media, the Middle East is depicted as tradition, exotic, or violent. Thus, these photographs allow the West to control the image of the Middle East as the backward “Other,” against which the West defines itself as modern. As international artists struggle to conform to the contemporary Western art ideals, which one must if they desire a career as an internationally known artist, the Middle Eastern artists must sacrifice the complexity of contemporary cultural and artistic values of their societies to appeal to the Western gaze. Rather than reflect on the immensely diverse history of their own societies, photographers in the Middle East either create documentarian bodies of work or produce the stereotypical images of their societies, and thereby reinforce Western media control of the Middle Eastern region. This paper is a semiotic analysis of photography by Youssef Nabil (Egypt), Walid Ra’ad (Lebanon) and Newsha Tavakolian (Iran) to argue that they are combating the mass media’s stereotypical image of the Middle East and Islam by humanizing their photography. They do not portray stereotypes but show subjects in a visual language that is universally relatable. Thus, the paper analyzes the photographs within the cultural and social frameworks in which they were produced.