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## Art, World, Artworld

### **Abstract**

*Ancient Greek philosophers claimed that the particular task of art was mimesis. This kind of view about the relation between art and the world was dominant until the beginning of the 19th century. The theory of genius rethought this relation, and it did not presume that art needs to mirror the world. On the contrary, it expected originality, that is, the creation of a new world. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the artworld operates under a wider notion of the ‘work of art’, e.g. Duchamp’s “readymade” and “institutional readymade”, which are linked to outsider art. In both cases, the creation of an object and the creation of an art piece are separate actions performed by different individuals. This paper attempts to tackle these problems and prove that the contemporary art does not relate primarily to the world, but mainly to the artworld. Thus, the path from art to the world goes through the artworld.*

### **Keywords**

mimesis, genius, artistic creation, readymade, artworld

### **Art as a mirror**

“Art as the mirror of reality” is a very common cliché about art. The persistence of this cliché is mainly due to the fact that the Renaissance actually regarded painting as a mirror.

“We are, however, building a new an art of painting about which nothing, as I see it, has been written in this age (...).”<sup>1</sup>

was claimed by Leon Battista Alberti during the Renaissance, and this was the common conception of painting. Since painting was the leading art form of the era, the mirror-metaphor was also applied to other forms of art. The basis of the mirror-theory can be found in Aristotle’s mimesis-theory, which is the central idea in his *Poetics*. In this work about poetry with a special regard to tragedy, the Greek author established at the start of the second paragraph that

“... epic poetry and the poesis of tragedy, and further comedy and the art of making dithyramps, and most of the art of the flute and of the cithara are all in general imitations.”<sup>2</sup>

There are significant similarities between the mirror-theory and mimesis (both refer to “replicas”, as in being ontologically secondary to their object:

1

Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, Yale University Press, New Haven 1970, p. 64.

2

Aristotle, *On Poetics*, St. Augustine’s Press, South Bend – Indiana 2002, p. 2.

mirroring presumes an external, first order being that has the ability to have a reflection, but this ability is incidental and contingent, while imitation relates to its relevant first order object), however, we can observe a slight shift in emphasis between the two. For Aristotle, imitation concerns mainly dynamic arts: tragedy “imitates those acting”<sup>3</sup> and music imitates emotions. Before we jump to the conclusion that mimesis can only imitate actions but not objects, let us consider the paragraph in which Aristotle mentions the characteristics of mimesis and where he states that

“... we take pleasure in contemplating the most precisely made images of things which in themselves we see with pain, for example, the visible shapes both of the least estimable of beasts and of corpses.”<sup>4</sup>

In the same paragraph, Aristotle reveals that, in his view, mimesis also means the imitation of the scene, similarly to Plato. On the other hand, it is not incidental that Aristotle was preoccupied with questions about tragedy in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and Alberti decided to investigate painting in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as both thinkers wanted to untangle the strings that made up the most prominent art form of their era.

The mirror-metaphor is not Alberti’s genuine idea, actually, it’s not even a Renaissance invention. We can encounter the mirror-painting metaphor in Plato when he attempted to ridicule our infatuation with painting and sculpture. Socrates presented the “painter” with his trademark irony: “What an extraordinary man! (...) He must be a wizard and no mistake (...)”;<sup>5</sup> because he can create anything. On the other hand, Socrates proved to us that the knowledge of the painter does not amount to anything extraordinary, since anyone could do the same thing, even the amazed naïve Glaucon:

“... an easy way enough; or rather, there are many ways in which the feat might be quickly and easily accomplished, none quicker than that of turning a mirror round and round.”<sup>6</sup>

While Plato used the mirror-metaphor for mockery, and drew our attention to the fact that all artistic creations “would be appearances only”,<sup>7</sup> the mirror-metaphor in the Renaissance embodies the credo of representational painting: “painting strives to represent things seen”;<sup>8</sup> and even though painting is only concerned with the surface of its object, according to Leonardo da Vinci,<sup>9</sup> it still captures its first truth. This brings us to a different self-conception of art: art is meant to represent nature in the most realistic way, as if we were looking at nature in a mirror. The appeal to nature is a genuinely new approach in which the visible world, nature as an environment, becomes a value on its own which does not merely fulfil the role of a transmitter towards God, true existence or the Realm of Ideas. The world that is represented in paintings is not the transcendent world, but our world. Our world is worthy of representation on its own.

The imagery of nature appears in this age. Until the Renaissance, and even in the early Renaissance, nature (trees, rocks, rivers) was represented in order to direct attention to the central figures. It was an aid in reconstructing the story of the picture and constructing the ambiance (e.g. Giotto’s *St. Francis Preaching to the Birds* or *The Lamentation*). For Leonardo, on the other hand, portrayals of nature have an aesthetic role. Given that painters were only beginning to recognize beauty in nature, they strived to produce “replicas” that resembled nature as thoroughly as possible: the “reflections” had to be completely free from any type of distortions or differences. They developed drawing grids, the linear and aerial perspective, they took risks by performing banned autopsies in secret in order to provide a deeper insight into the human anatomy

and make the portrayal of body ever more accurate. The results achieved by the Renaissance, in respect to the techniques of figurative representation, are spectacular and quite hard to surpass, and are also the reason why realistic representation began to rule the artworld for the following 500 years.

The idea of “art as a mirror” was strengthened due to the fact that, by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the concept of art was crystallized and it was established as the imitation of nature. In a famous 1746 writing *Les Beaux-Arts réduits à un même principe*, Charles Batteux did not discriminate between different art forms that were considered to be separate disciplines up to that point (poetry, painting, sculpture, music, and dance), and he declared that

“... nature is the sole object of all the arts”,<sup>10</sup>

and that all arts merely imitate nature in their specific ways. Batteux goes even further and states that

“... art is only perfect when it reflects nature perfectly, and masterpieces are the ones that represent nature so well, that we might mistake them for nature itself.”<sup>11</sup>

Denis Diderot, who – as a notable polyhistor – studied the art of painting and valued art inspired by nature and real life above the mannerism of academic painting, expressed a similar view in 1766. Diderot took Batteux’s view a step further: his predecessor expected the imitation of nature to include an idealizing motion, that the artist depicts nature as it is supposed to be. Diderot, on the other hand, thought that the painter does not have any other role but to observe nature and copy it precisely, “plus l’imitation serrait parfaite et analogue aux causes, plus nous on serrions satisfaits”, since “la nature ne fait rien d’incorrect”, thus we do not have any reason to correct nature.<sup>12</sup> The painter’s only job is to create a reflection of nature.

Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the dominant view was that art is meant to represent world, more particularly to represent *nature*, and the more a product resembles reality, the more valuable it is. This entailed a great over-appreciation of the skills, techniques and knowledge necessary for the precise representation of reality. Artists were not supposed to represent reality in their own unique way, but were supposed to be precise and reflect nature the best way they could. This approach was put aside in the 19<sup>th</sup> century for numerous reasons. First of all, the genius-theory appeared, leading to a new perspective accord-

3  
Ibid., p. 4.

4  
Ibid., p. 8.

5  
Plato, *The Republic*, Pennsylvania State University Press, Hazleton (n. d.), p. 269.

6  
Ibid.

7  
Ibid., p. 270.

8  
L. B. Alberti, *On Painting*, p. 67.

9  
See Leonardo da Vinci, *Notebooks*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2008.

10  
See Charles Batteux, *Les Beaux-Arts réduits à un même principe*, Chez Durand, Paris 1746, p. 7. [Translated by G. H.]

11  
Ibid., p. 17.

12  
“... the more imitation will be perfect and analogue to the causes, the more we will be content (...) the nature does not make incorrect things.” See Denis Diderot, “Essai sur la peinture”, in: *Oeuvres complètes de Diderot. Tome Dixième*, Garnier frères, Libraires-éditeurs, Paris 1966, p. 462. [Translated by G. H.]

ing to which the most important task of the genius was not to copy everything in a sedulous manner, but to strive for originality.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, romanticism discovered emotion, and it believed that the task of the artist is to express and to arouse emotions in the audience. Finally, due to technology, a “mirror” much more precise than any painting in the world was created, and that mirror is photography. A photograph is not only able to reflect reality perfectly, but it can also “freeze” the reflection, which would otherwise be gone within seconds. *Prima facie*, art has lost its legitimacy as a mirror of reality.

### Genius, as *demiourgos*

“To create a work of art is to create the world.”

Wassily Kandinsky

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the general view about art and the role of the artist changed, and the shift can be traced to Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. In this work from 1790, Kant did not only establish grounds for the autonomous aesthetics in philosophy, but also constructed the theoretical basis for artistic autonomy. The central idea in this new perspective is that there is no concept of beauty: searching for the beauty criteria or for the rules of fine arts would be in vain since these do not exist. No precise and concrete criterion exists that could be applied to particular instances, thus the fine arts cannot rely on rationally deducible and applicable rules. If this is true, the role of the artist is not to use skills, knowledge or techniques as beauty does not fall into any of these categories. Since artists cannot follow any formula, they do not really have any other choice but to be original. Kant concludes that “fine arts are the art of the genius” and that the most important characteristic of a genius is originality, and furthermore, “everyone agrees that genius is entirely opposed to the spirit of imitation”.<sup>14</sup>

A radical shift can be identified in the way the role of the artist was perceived: while initially manual skills and dexterity were the most highly appraised talents of the artist, they have lost most of their value by the standards of that era. The artist is a genius because she is original: she can create a new reality without following a pattern, and has the power to create new rules for art, a power very similar to those of nature. The artist takes the place of nature in art: in this genuinely new world, created by the artist, the artist *is* nature. From that point on, the creation of the perfect double is not the task of art anymore: the artistic creation is a new world with its own inner laws and principles, logic and sense. The world created by art is the realm of fantasy and imagination, where the subjectivity of the artist objectifies dreams and values, where emotions materialize and gain voice or form.

As the roots of the mirror-theory can be found in ancient Greece in the idea of mimesis, the genius-theory also has Greek roots. Timothy Gould found the roots of the genius concept in five Greek terms:<sup>15</sup>

*mantiké* – a state of being possessed by something divine and immortal

*enthousiasmos* – the indwelling of a god

*tekhné* – art, craft or skill

*daimon* – a guardian spirit

*demiourgos* – maker or craftsman

Indeed, the prefiguration in the creation by the genius can be linked to Demiurge from Plato’s works: she is the one who creates the world following the

model of the Ideas. The difference lies in the fact that the ancient Ideas were eternal things, thus they would exist prior to the creation of the world. The genius artist does not have this luxury: the role of the original artist is to create from nothing. The special state which makes creation possible is called *inspiration*, and it has its own ancient roots. Plato explained artistic creation as a divine possession (*mantiké*).<sup>16</sup> *Tekhné* is one of the central concepts from Gould's list, although it has lost a lot of its relevance, and it plays a significantly smaller role in the evaluation of the artist. In this respect, the attitude of the Greeks is also unclear. Plato emphasizes that the poet does not have expertise, but creates the object in the state of some sort of divine possession. This state is so unique that it cannot be reached by anybody, it cannot be learned, rationally reproduced or controlled. We can spot a resemblance with the state of the modern genius. The difference, yet again, is that the genius does not draw her ideas from any higher source – she does not transmit messages from gods, rather, she creates a new world. An element persisting from the Greek roots is the Demiurge, who creates a new world in the state of enthusiasm.

The perspective changes at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the modern episteme,<sup>17</sup> temporality, and especially historicity played a crucial role. Thus the 19<sup>th</sup> century realizes that the new world, created by the artist, is not only natural, but can also be social. Around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the artistic avant-garde was born.

'Avant-garde' is a military term meaning the 'advance guard' or 'vanguard': a small military group whose job is to seek out the enemy and clear out the way for the rest of the troops. In a metaphorical way, the term 'avant-garde' was first used in 1825 by Olinde Rodrigues, a follower of Saint Simon, who claimed that artists were the vanguard of social change. They are the ones who discover uncharted territories for the rest of society. Why would the task fall on the artists? Because mapping the future presumes imagination and creativity, which are the typical properties of the specialists of imagination – the artists.

As an avant-garde artist, a genius basically maps our shared possible worlds and she foresees the future of our shared reality. This is nothing other than a political engagement, which gets in conflict with the modern idea of the independent artist. The avant-garde artist seeks the conception of a new world; she envisions a new society while stressing the importance of her own role in the process – "la distinction", as Bourdieu quite aptly puts it.<sup>18</sup> The avant-garde artist's search for the conception of the new world is closely related to denying everything that is bourgeois, philistine, or ordinary. The clash of the

13

See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000. doi: <http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511804656>.

14

Ibid., p. 187.

15

See Timothy Gould, "Genius: Conceptual and Historical Overview", in: Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, vol. II, Oxford University Press, New York – Oxford 1998, pp. 287–292.

16

See Plato, *Ion*, The Project Gutenberg EBook 2008, available at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1635/1635-h/1635-h.htm> (accessed on December 2, 2014).

17

See Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses. Archéologie des sciences humaines*, Gallimard, Paris 1966.

18

See Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction: Critique sociale du jugement*, Les Editions de Minuit, Paris 1979.

two types of modern (social modernity and artistic modernism)<sup>19</sup> takes place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The avant-garde, with its need to highlight its own originality, creativity and determination for experimentation, is probably the purest instantiation of the concept of the genius. At the same time, it also bears the self-destructive traits of the concept: the avant-garde artist is so eager to find the extraordinary that her hunt for *distinction* drives a bigger and bigger wedge between her and the potential receivers – the audience. Art becomes more and more exclusive, and we can not only find the *l'art pour l'art*, but also the *l'art pour l'artiste*. Artists begin to communicate solely among each other and their peers are their only audience, because only they can understand each other and the spectators are getting more and more closed off. The original role of the avant-garde is not fulfilled anymore: it is quite hard to imagine a vanguard that intentionally leaves the legion. We probably should not refer to it as a vanguard, it is closer to being a villain or a traitor.

If all this is true, we need to re-evaluate the role of the genius-artist and the creation of a new world. The endeavour is valuable if it is for the good of our new, shared world – if all that an artist does is create a world that can only be entered with a VIP pass, the legitimacy of her originality becomes questionable.

Ideation, a task specifically reserved for the artist, as Olinde Rodrigues thought, is getting ever more appropriated by scientists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was obvious to Kant that only the artist can be a genius – all that a scientist does is apply algorithms and follow a rational line of thought, two skills that could be mastered by anyone. There is no possibility for *creation* in science because everything is already empirically coded, and all we have to do is bring it forward and make explicit the things that are already implicitly in our minds. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the situation turned over: today, when we think of the word ‘genius’, the first person that comes to our mind is Einstein, who was a scientist and not an artist. The architects of the new world are not artists, but scientists. Art needs to re-define itself.

### **Artworld, as interface**

Self-reflection in art became more common by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mirroring the existing world and building new worlds persisted to be a topic for some artists, but a great number of artistic ventures arose with the goal of delineating the artistic world and asking philosophical questions such as what is the true nature of the arts (for example painting),<sup>20</sup> or when is an object a piece of art.<sup>21</sup> These questions, which are related to the artistic practice, suggested that art does not tackle the outside world anymore, but is more concerned with itself. The most salient conceptualizations of the moment of artistic self-reflection come from a formalist and a contextualist direction.

Because the traditional task of representation was apparently more aptly fulfilled by photography, the art, especially painting, needed to clarify the basis of its own existence. If photos are truly better reflections than paintings then, most probably, paintings are not supposed to be reflections anymore, even if their existence is justifiable at that point. Impressionism was the first in a series of “-isms” that were determined to interpret art in a non-mirror way. From a theoretical perspective, this has led to the rise of an art-conception which claimed that the content of art-pieces (the reality mirrored by art) does

not play an important role anymore and that theme or content in art lost their relevancy, while formal aspects became crucial.

Clive Bell's 1913 book, plainly titled *Art*, presented the formalist approach in a very clear way. Bell asked about what evokes the aesthetic emotion and came to the conclusion that it has to be the significant form, a shared characteristic of all visual art-forms:

"... in each (object), lines and colours combined in a particular way, certain forms and relations of forms, [that] stir our aesthetic emotions."<sup>22</sup>

Bell rejected the type of painting he calls "descriptive painting":

"... portraits of psychological and historical value, topographical works, pictures that tell stories and suggest situations, illustrations of all sorts."<sup>23</sup>

Actually, he is talking about the type of paintings that mirror the world. Bell completely distanced himself from this type, stating that "according to my hypothesis they are not works of art",<sup>24</sup> thus erasing the main line of evolution, beginning from the dawn of the Renaissance until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He also called the Renaissance "that strange, new disease".<sup>25</sup> He believed that "with the perfection of photographic processes and of the cinematograph, pictures of this sort are becoming otiose".<sup>26</sup>

Clive Bell's book and Roger Fry's organizing talents played a defining role in the introduction and propagation of post-impressionism (the term 'post-impressionism' was actually coined by Fry). They claimed that the turning point could be re-traced to the art of Cézanne, who paid close attention to the importance of the form. Their commitment to the "significant form" did not mean the total rejection of representation. They did not think that representation was bad in itself – simply, that it was irrelevant. Paintings do not have to be compared to any prior model to help us determine their value:

"To appreciate fully a work of art we require nothing but sensibility."<sup>27</sup>

Clement Greenberg joined this line of thought at the middle of the century. He also played an important role in establishing the monopoly of formalism in the post-war America. His goal was to construct the philosophical basis of his own formalist vision. In his work *Modernist Painting* (1965) Greenberg held that art has gone through a shift, similar to the one Kant did in philosophy. As Kant used the means of philosophy to initiate a process of self-reflection and drew the necessary borders of philosophy, art was going through a similar change, according to Greenberg. Art was questioning itself: what is its pur-

19  
Matei Călinescu, *Cinci fețe ale modernității: modernism, avangardă, decadență, kitsch, post-modernism*, Polirom-Collegium, Iași 2005, p. 53.

20  
See Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting", *Art and Literature* 4 (1965), pp. 193–201.

21  
See Arthur C. Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA) – London 1981.

22  
Clive Bell, *Art*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1987, p. 8.

23  
Ibid., p. 17.

24  
Ibid., p. 17.

25  
Ibid., p. 149.

26  
Ibid., p. 18.

27  
Ibid., p. 98.

pose, what is proper for art, what is that *je ne sais quoi* that cannot be found in any other discipline, but

“... that which was unique and irreducible in each particular art. Each art had to determine, through its own operations and works, the effects exclusive to itself.”<sup>28</sup>

Thus he established that art should separate itself from the representation of the recognizable things, from questions of the perspective, the story told, or even the moral lesson. What remained was *flatness* as the particular medium of art. In this metanarrative, the evolution of modern painting would necessarily lead to the rise of abstract expressionism, which does not point to anything besides Greenberg’s formalist expectations:

“... visual art should confine itself exclusively to what is given in visual experience, and make no reference to anything given in any other order of experience.”<sup>29</sup>

Abstract expressionism, supported by Greenberg himself, ruled the US artistic scene for two decades. If you wanted to become an artist, you could not escape being an abstract expressionist. This streak was broken in the sixties by conceptualism and pop art. These two directions affected the artworld in ways beyond imaginable because they introduced entities whose presence invoked the question: but is it art? Duchamp’s famous piece, the *Fountain*, was originally a urinal purchased in a store, which has been inverted by the artist, signed and named “Fountain”. We might ask about what makes this object a work of art, and what differentiates this piece from all the others on the shelves of the store? Or why is Andy Warhol’s *Brillo Box* a work of art, while all the others in the supermarket are not? Formalism, which claims that the essence of art lies in the form, cannot answer these questions: two objects from two completely different ontological classes barely differ in the way they look. This is the basis for Danto’s “visually-indistinguishable-pairs argument”:<sup>30</sup> if there is no visible difference between Duchamp’s snow shovel and any other shovel, but the former is a work of art, while the latter is not, the difference must not lie in the perceptual (formal) properties. Danto’s suggestion is that what makes the ordinary object into a work of art (what *baptizes* the ordinary object) is actually the artworld:

“To see something as art requires something the eye cannot decri – an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld.”<sup>31</sup>

While formalism believes that the historical evolution of painting will come to an endpoint, in 1984 Arthur Danto stated that this type of art-perception, which claims that there is a linear evolution in art, will end and that “the age of pluralism is upon us.”<sup>32</sup> This pluralism is made possible by the fact that by the sixties the experimentations of art have concluded the following: the reason why something is art depends on its relation to the artworld, or rather, whether we can establish such a relation.

The real progress in the relation of art and the world is not only that art is more concerned with itself than the world, but that art is actually realized by the artworld surrounding it. This thought is most prominent when:

- 1) Relevant objects cannot be distinguished from their non-art counterparts.
- 2) Relevant objects were not conceived to become works of art, but were introduced into the world of art when they were “baptized” by the artworld.

Both apply to the *readymade* introduced by Marcel Duchamp. The term is used for industrially produced objects picked out (chosen) by the artist from a line of identical items. In becoming a *readymade*, they lose their original



purpose as utility-items. In some cases, the artist makes changes on the object (like in the case of Duchamp's 1913 *Bicycle Wheel*) and in some cases he does not (like in the cases of the *Fountain* or *Egouttoir*). A determining factor is the naming: the name of the snow shovel, *In Advance of a Broken Arm*, might seem paradoxical, since the object is a real shovel hanging on the museum walls. The shovel will never be used for shovelling by anyone, so the probability of someone breaking their arm from the effort of using it is quite small. Even the titles which at first glance seem descriptive are deceiving: the *Bottlerack* apparently names the object, but once we take a look at its French name – *Egouttoir* – we realize that it contains the French word for taste: *le goût*. Thus, for the once naive bystander, it might seem that the bottle dryer is actually a machine with the (hidden) role to evaporate taste itself: a classic concept of art, one which Duchamp rebelled against and succeeded in revolutionizing. In regard to the *readymades*, we can surely state that in absence of an art theory, based on the idea of baptizing these objects, they would never become works of art because nothing would differentiate them from the most common items. The artworld's interpretation of these objects re-evaluates them:

“... as a transformative procedure, interpretation is something like baptism, not in the sense of giving a name, but a new identity, participation in the community of the elect.”<sup>33</sup>

They can only become readymade art through their relation to the artworld. The situation might be even more puzzling in the case of outsider art, a new trend of the last few years in the world of art. At the 2013 Venice Biennale, Massimiliano Gioni curator's palette of exposed pieces, set in the main pavilion of the event about the outsider art, was impressive and surprising at the same time. There were paintings, drawings (like Anna Zemankova's pictures resembling flowers, or Emma Kunz's diagrams), diary entries, board drawings (like Rudolf Steiner's sketches and scribbles made during his lectures, which were preserved on black paper), and collections of objects (like Bispo do Rosario's objects meant for salvation, or Morton Bartlett's collection of dolls, or insurance agent Peter Fritz's collection of 378 model houses). The term 'outsider art' was used for works made by people outside of the artworld, without any artistic education, who do not see themselves as artists and do not see their works as works of art. Emma Kunz used her diagrams in her healing séances to get closer to her patients, Rudolf Steiner took notes on the blackboard during his classes, Bispo do Rosario collected items (from pieces of cloth to shoe heels) to secure their survival after the approaching apocalypse, Morton Bartlett made disturbing dolls for his own enjoyment and later boxed them, so the dolls were found only after his death by an art dealer. The above mentioned objects were not conceived as household items, but they were also

28  
C. Greenberg, “Modernist Painting”, p. 195.

29  
Ibid., p. 199.

30  
See A. C. Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*.

31  
Arthur C. Danto, “The Artworld”, *The Journal of Philosophy* 61 (19/1964), pp. 571–584.  
doi: <http://doi.org/10.2307/2022937>.

32  
Arthur C. Danto, *The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art*, Columbia University Press, New York 1986, p. 114.

33  
A. C. Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, p. 126.

never meant to fulfil the role of art pieces. Their purpose was to bear some type of meaning, but in a more personal and less artistic way. We consider them works of art because a significant agent of the artworld (art dealer, critic, curator etc.) picked them out from all the others and established a connection between them and the artworld.

It is because of this relation that I propose that they should be referred to as *institutional readymade*: a representative of the artworld finds/chooses these objects (“object trouvé”) and because of that they become significant parts of the art arena. In the case of the institutional readymade, similarly to the above mentioned cases, it becomes obvious that the identification of these items as objects of art is realized through baptism by the artworld.

### **The relation of art and the world**

In our brief review, we established three forms of the relation between art and the world. In the first form, art was a reflection of the world. In the second form, the genius created a new world, while in the third form, that fine line between art and everyday life gets blurred and the critical distinction between the two is their different relation to the artworld.

We treated art as a distinct area, an external entity in opposition to the world. But, obviously, art is a part of life, part of “the world” once we conceptualize “the world” as the totality of things. But inside the world itself art has its own inner world, with its own rules and firm borders, even if the adventurous artist will never stop challenging it. The world of art is so self-propelling that art mostly relates to the world through the artworld.

Gizela Horváth

### Umjetnost, svijet, svijet umjetnosti

#### **Sažetak**

*Grčki filozofi tvrdili su da je specifičan zadatak umjetnosti mimesis. Ova vrsta stava o odnosu između umjetnosti i svijeta bila je prevladavajuća do početka 19. stoljeća. Teorija genija u umjetnosti preispituje ovaj odnos te ne pretpostavlja da umjetnost treba oponašati svijet, nego očekuje originalnost: stvaranje novoga svijeta. Od početka 20. stoljeća svijet umjetnosti djeluje pod širim pojmom »umjetničkog djela«, primjerice Duchampov »readymade« i »institucionalni readymade« povezani s autsajderskom umjetnošću. U oba su slučaja stvaranje objekta i stvaranje umjetničkog djela odvojene djelatnosti koje izvode različiti pojedinci. Ovaj se rad nastoji uhvatiti u koštac s ovim proširenjima te dokazati da suvremena umjetnost nije primarno povezana sa svijetom, nego u većini slučajeva sa svijetom umjetnosti. Stoga put od umjetnosti prema svijetu ide kroz svijet umjetnosti.*

#### **Ključne riječi**

*mimesis, genij, umjetničko stvaranje, readymade, svijet umjetnosti*

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### Kunst, Welt, Kunstwelt

#### **Zusammenfassung**

*Antike griechische Philosophen behaupteten, die besondere Aufgabe der Kunst sei die Mimesis gewesen. Eine solche Betrachtungsweise der Beziehung zwischen Kunst und Welt dominierte bis zum Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts. Die Genie-Theorie in der Kunst überdachte diese Beziehung*

*und nahm nicht an, dass die Kunst die Welt nachahmen muss, vielmehr erwartete sie die Originalität: die Schaffung einer neuen Welt. Seit Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts figuriert die Kunstwelt unter dem breiteren Begriff des „Kunstwerks“, beispielsweise in Form von Duchamps „Readymade“ und „institutionellem Readymade“, die mit der Außenseiterkunst verbunden sind. In beiden Fällen sind die Schaffung eines Objekts und die Schaffung eines Kunstwerks zwei getrennte und von unterschiedlichen Personen ausgeführte Tätigkeiten. Das Paper versucht, diese Extensionen in Angriff zu nehmen und zu beweisen, dass sich die zeitgenössische Kunst an erster Stelle nicht auf die Welt bezieht, sondern vor allem auf die Kunstwelt. Daher führt der Weg von der Kunst bis zur Welt durch die Kunstwelt.*

**Schlüsselwörter**

*Mimesis, Genie, künstlerisches Schaffen, Readymade, Kunstwelt*

**Gizela Horváth**

**Art, monde, monde de l'art**

**Résumé**

*Les philosophes de la Grèce antique affirmaient que la principale tâche de l'art était la mimesis. Cette manière de penser la relation entre l'art et le monde a été prédominante jusqu'au début du XIXe siècle. La théorie du génie a remis en question cette relation sans présupposer que l'art devait imiter le monde, mais au contraire, elle en a attendu une certaine originalité : la création d'un nouveau monde. Depuis le début du XXe siècle le monde de l'art se présente sous la notion plus large d'« oeuvre d'art », notamment dans la perspective du Ready-made de Duchamp liée à l'art brut. Dans les deux cas, la création de l'objet et la création de l'oeuvre d'art sont deux activités séparées réalisées par des individus distincts. Cet article tente de lutter contre certaines extrapolations et montre que l'art contemporain n'est pas d'abord relié au monde mais principalement au monde de l'art. Ainsi, le chemin qui passe de l'art au monde traverse le monde de l'art.*

**Mots-clés**

*Mimesis, génie, création artistique, Ready-made, monde de l'art*