

CY-ICER 2012

The role of decoration magazines in the art education

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Abstract

This notification aims to find out what kind of effects furniture and decoration magazines have on the art education. It is possible to mention about two different points of view regarding this subject. The first one argues that products, which take place in these magazines, are results of a design process; they aim to develop creativity of readers besides providing their artistic and aesthetical developments; and thus, they can be useful in the art education. The second one emphasizes that these magazines are products of the popular culture; they serve to the expansion of the popular culture; and thus, they cannot contribute to the art education. Visual arts education aims to enable persons to express their emotions, opinions and observations; and to increase their skills and creativities to an aesthetical level. It is an education activity which teaches persons how to canalize their excitements. The art education is not just/only limited to the visual arts given at schools, and it is required to last for the whole life.

Keywords: Decoration Magazines, Art Education

1. Introduction

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2. Home Decoration Magazines

Today, various specialist magazines are published in Turkey, as they are across the world; the number of such magazines increases daily.

Magazines come second only to daily newspapers in terms of the press/printed media. They are more permanent than newspapers through their different approach to the subject matter and because of their stylistic features. They are more durable and effective through their specialized approaches.

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If a definition of magazine is to be made, the following characteristics should be emphasized: Magazines are paperback publications; published at least once a month, sometimes they are weekly. They combine text and photography, there is a demand for them from the readers and they are distributed independently from other publications.

In print media, there are many magazines concerned with home decoration or interior design. Some of these are the products of foreign/international media groups; others have a more local orientation. Magazines have defined their quality and appeal themselves in terms such as, *“Innovative, accessible, guiding and most importantly a useful magazine”*¹; *“It is not only the first source to inform the reader about the latest trends and designers, but it is also among those who create these trends. It guides the reader on how the aesthetic values reflected on the pages can enrich life, and it inspires its readers to create their own styles”*²; *“It is a life culture magazine. Maison Française is incontestably in the leader position in Turkey and has been since the very first time of its publication. It offers creative ideas for each phase of decoration, in urban or rural living areas, for people with different life styles. It gives examples of the movements which have left a mark in the past and which still speak to many people, while also following up-to-date trends in the field of decoration and design.”*³

When the content of decoration magazines is examined, it is seen that they are very colorful. According to their focus areas, they may have columns devoted to decoration (applications, indoor areas, creative advice, decoration solutions, objects, interviews, artists, designers etc.), gardens (outdoor areas, landscape advice, and plant care) and good living (gourmet dishes, cigars, wine and drink culture, travel and outdoor sports).

The reader mainly expects to be informed about daily art events (the term “art” may include and refer to new trends in decoration) the work of particular artists/designers and advice on current trends, with the help of an accessible text. The task of a journalist specialized in writing for such a magazine is to write in an everyday and comprehensible language. This obligation, the use of a simple language, is to enable much wider access to the subject and to avoid the “high art” and exclusive language of more rarefied magazines.

3. Notes on Art Education

Visual arts education aims to enable persons to express their emotions, opinions and observations; and to increase their skills and creativities to an aesthetical level. It is an education activity which teaches persons how to canalize their excitements.

The art education is not just/only limited to the visual arts given at schools, and it is required to last for the whole life.

Art education gives individuals the courage to express themselves. It enables individuals to perceive the value of life, to be aware of details and to improve the quality of life. Art education may also be considered as a process of creative intellectual activity which predicts and generates original and contemporary ideas. One of its key targets is to nurture innovators who can not only shape themselves but people who can help shape others. An individual’s aesthetic consciousness of the environment should be developed so that s/he can have a positive effect on the environment where s/he lives, to make it more livable. This shows the importance of both the content and the application of art education curriculums. Raising individuals who are sensitive to the environment, who can develop the environment with aesthetic values and make it more livable is possible with art education.

¹ HomeArt: http://www.hepoku.com/dergiler.php?d_id=7

² Elle Decoration: <http://www.dbr.com.tr/dergiler/elledecor/01021/>

³ Maison Française: <http://www.emecmua.com/YayinDetay.aspx?DID=95>

4. Conclusion

As is well-known, the establishments which educated and socialized individuals until recently, were the family, school and religion. An individual learnt the dominant rules of society via these establishments or via his/her own perceptions and experiences. However friend groups, schools and mass media tools such as radio and television came to replace these establishments with the advent of the modern era. They undertook the task of socializing the individual. Home decoration magazines, which are the subject of the present study, leave even school and family education behind by creating and disseminating their own values concerning their subject area and thus they stimulate the creativity of individuals.

However, we live in a period where identities are chosen, constructed and changed through a culture of consumption. And women's magazines serve exactly for this very purpose.

Neither an elite nor a traditional folk culture survives under the living conditions that shape today. We face a culture that we call a "mass culture", one that is based on mass media tools which transform society.

The aesthetic environmental consciousness of an individual who feels an inherent need to organize things can be improved via art education. For this reason, he/she should have the consciousness of how to organize his/her environment. Thus, it may be possible for him/her to see the corridors and passageways of a school, house, street and city where he/she lives from a different perspective.

There are various answers to the question, "What kind of role can decoration magazines play in art education?"⁴. The subjects which are addressed in these magazines (especially furniture design etc.) are also addressed in various institutions for fine arts education. Photography, graphic design and the overall design of the magazine are the key components used to address the above mentioned subjects. The content of these magazines can be used in classes in art education institutions and the messages they give can be discussed. A subject chosen from a magazine from previous years can be compared to a subject taken from a more recent magazine in order for the teaching to have a critical-historical perspective. Moreover, the effect of turning back to the past, as revealed in the art and the products displayed in these magazines, can be questioned. The products can be newly discussed and reinterpreted.

In daily life, magazines are thought to be the places where people who do not know how to organize their environments can find an answer. It is known that people are ready to spend a huge amount of time and effort to transform their everyday objects into pieces of art even though they know that they will not become "useful". A well-done job can create admiration in the people around. For this reason, these magazines play an important and guiding role.

Every society should respond to the aesthetic and emotional demands of its people, no matter what their development levels are. Every society should assist individuals in developing their skills in perceiving symbolic arrangements and respond to their need to comprehend their own society, it should understand their fears, and help them in evaluating the use of their free time.

There is an interaction between individuals and the mass media tools that they encounter directly or indirectly in their daily lives. In the way that many people who want to receive information about cultural events prefer the press as a source of information, these magazine publications are the main tools which expand popular culture and transform their readers.

References

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