

JACK LANGNER  
 Director Jackup Xposure  
 Modern Media Marketing

PIXELS  
 VERSUS  
 Pigment

Mention that you have recently been to an art exhibition and to most people will come flooding images of pale naked voluptuous ladies, grand overly-detailed frames hugging fading oil paint-filled canvases and stone sculptures of smoothed humanoid forms captured in their eternal poses. But is this what art is? This is definitely what art was and has been for a very long time but how many of us really know what art is today? In actual fact, this form of art-making ended approximately 50 years ago and art as an entity has gone through at least five major steps of evolution since then.

So what is art today? Many people will say 'yes, but this stuff where they put a shoe on a wall and call it art doesn't make sense to me', and that would perhaps be a valid point. As people evolved through the ages to assimilate more information and learn more, so did art evolve to cater for highly intellectually-demanding people. Art has shifted and has moved away from the art of the visual towards the art of thought. In other words, art has shifted from an expression with deeper meaning to just the deeper meaning. As we have seen time and time again, it is not necessarily people who paint the best who are the most revered artists. Take Picasso and Van Gogh for instance. Although they had tremendous technical artistic talent, the work they are famous for shows no excessive amount of hand skill. Their brilliance lies rather in the creative geniuses of their minds in terms of expressing themselves in their art. Thus there has always been a movement towards

intellectual art - we have reached a point in artistic evolution where art is almost purely intellectual. If we want to appreciate art today we have to ask 'but why did he put the shoe on the wall?' You might not always be satisfied by the answer in the same way that you might not always appreciate a particular piece of art, but then perhaps you will be unexpectedly mentally tantalised. So next time you get the opportunity, visit a contemporary art exhibition and open your mind to the thoughts and expressions of the commentators of our day. If nothing more, it would be an interesting detour from the ever too familiar and overly-repeated story-lines we get from our television and movie shows.

This might be an interesting way to view contemporary exhibition art, but what about all the other art forms? What has become of them? What happened to the traditionally thought-to-be high art that was never produced for art exhibitions. The great murals found in Da Vinci's chapels, the wonderfully vibrant African sculptures, Spanish castles, Japanese watercolour, Victorian furniture and Aztec carvings - where are contemporary equivalents? Just look around you. The cover on this magazine, the label on your lip ice, the car that you come to work in, the jingle on the radio

and even your hairstyle. All these are forms of expression which rely heavily on cultural knowledge gathered through thousands of years of human evolution. Wine bottle labels, for instance, can be compared to the different movements in painting through the ages, and although you may find

a couple of radical designs, they all submit to the basic traditional principles inherited through the ages.

Similarly the new rage of computer generated movies like *Shrek* can be compared to the great Romantics' initial movement who, with oil pigments, tried to achieve ultimate photorealism, here re-manifesting itself through the computer age and the use of the pixel. It is a repetition of

a similar movement and, contrary to what people might believe, involves just as much, if not more work, time, skill and artistic knowledge than previous forms of art. The fact that a computer gives you more freedom in actual fact makes it harder and not easier for an artist, because the artistic choices he or she now has to make are so much more complex. We are just in the infancy of this new form of art-making and it seems that we can expect many more exciting movements in this genre.

The next time you go to work, go out for dinner, watch television at home or are anywhere near something that was created by someone, spare a moment to consider how they designed it, why they made it like that, how the world influenced them to produce it like that, and most importantly, why you like it or not. This will teach you more about yourself. Everybody can be creative. Everything we do is art of some sort. Look around and enjoy our vibrant world filled with human expression and different tastes.

Below from left:  
 Weeping Woman (1937) by Pablo Picasso  
 La route au cypres (1890) by Vincent van Gogh  
 Typical Victorian furniture (1850)  
 The Bishop's Palace in Astorga, designed by Spanish architect Antoni Gaudí in 1887

