

## *Metaphor, Symbol, and Contemporary Art*

A metaphor is a personalized symbol, and a symbol is an image that is attributed to a specific message agreed by the general public. A metaphor, as such, is naturally artistic since it must be created by the user of that metaphor. If used in repetition, however, metaphor can become a symbol. That is, through repetition, a metaphor, which intrinsically is a subjective creation, transforms into an image that is believed by the general public as true. *In short, metaphor in repetition is ideology.*

A work of art, which is defined by the subjective worldview of the artist, is then a metaphorical endeavor of an artist to manifest truth. Artists are, then, independent dictators of their worldviews, and their works of art are the ideological tools by which they govern their worlds. "Ideology" I speak here is not a political one, rather a metaphorical one. Please don't get excited.

The problem with contemporary art is that today's artists are scared and get too excited by the word "ideology" and are unwilling to (perhaps don't have the guts to) express their subjective thoughts, their metaphors. In turn, they produce "works of arts" that are completely determined by the audience. There is no vision behind contemporary art. There is no style in contemporary art, hence no artist. There is, of course, nothing wrong with allowing the audience to determine the meaning of works of art. What is intrinsically weak about contemporary art is that because the audience has complete control of works of contemporary art, contemporary works of art are none but symbols. In a contemporary art piece, there is no worldview – there is only reiteration of information that are already known. A contemporary work of art is as repetitive and didactic as an anti-smoking television advertisement. It displays messages; it informs; it is intellectual. But it contains no honesty, which derives from the artist's heart that subjectively loves the natural qualities of his/her creative medium.

Another problem with contemporary art is its name. Contemporary art, just like the ever continuing ice age of postmodernism<sup>1</sup>, halts the progression of art. Today is contemporary, and anything in the future will be contemporary. In this logic, there is no need to critically approach art any longer. Everything is "contemporary art". One can do anything and become an artist. No one needs to believe in order to become an artist. No belief, no spirit.

Let me ask you all. *Is everyone really an artist?*

Let me answer that with my own word. *No.*

Believe.

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<sup>1</sup> I have written about this before.