

Research on the Aesthetic Education in the Age of Social Media

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Abstract: In the generation of social media, the rapid development of technology has inevitably transformed art, and the way it is consumed, shared, and created. Art has developed a greater focus on aesthetics and beauty, along with the desires of the viewer instead of the artists. The rise of different trends and styles may pressure artists to change their art to conform to these trends, and individuality will have to be sacrificed for the sake of views, likes, and validation from the users. Nonetheless, these platforms have proved to be a great tool for artists, allowing a direct reach to global audiences and engagement in interactive experiences. Communities created online may encourage growth, providing information and opportunities that may have been inaccessible to them previously, lowering the threshold of artistic creation and increasing accessibility. This may allow emerging or discriminated artists to present their work without any traditional barriers. Additionally, social media may stimulate the creative spirit of artists, allowing a variety of sources to draw inspiration from, and creating an environment that fosters experimentation and innovation. Unfortunately, social media is not without its drawbacks on its impact on art. A focus on popularity with likes, follows, and shares may cause a superficial exchange of art. Platforms may usually promote artworks that are easily consumable and visually appealing, disregarding any genuine artworks that may require a deeper reflection. This may additionally exacerbate the commercialization tendency in art, leading to a lack of originality in artworks.

Keywords: Social media, interaction, artistic creation, accessibility, artistic integrity.

1. Introduction

Social media has dramatically changed the landscape of artistic creation and exchange, offering not only potentially life-changing opportunities, but also stimulating creativity by offering unique challenges for both the audience and the artist. This paper will delve into how social media may lower barriers to artistic entry and allow a more interactive experience in art while also fostering superficiality and commercialization in the art world.

As social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok becomes more and more popular, art has become centralized in these communities. The benefits of social media to the artist are impossible to ignore. They enable these artists to engage directly with their audience, receive feedback instantly, and showcase their work without having to work around traditional gatekeepers such as galleries and museums. The democratization of art has empowered emerging and discriminated artists. However, certain features of social media, such as engagement metrics and

algorithm-driven content visibility, can also lead to the creation of art that prioritizes popularity over substance.

Despite the significant impact of social media on art, there is an absence of research exploring both its positive and negative effects. Most studies do not examine the nuanced interplay between the potential of social media and its role in commercialization of art. This paper aims to fill the gap in research by providing a balanced analysis of the effects of social media on artistic practices and exchange.

The dual-edged nature of social media and its influence on art is crucial for the audience and artists to recognize. This paper seeks to provide insight into the dynamics of the potential pitfalls and opportunities to aid artists in navigating the digital landscape and cultivating meaningful interactions with their audience without allowing the pressure of social media to affect their artistic integrity. 2. The Impact of Social Media on Artistic Creation

The rapid growth of social media has inevitably transformed many aspects of the art world, including how art is created.

Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and Pinterest have shown to have a significant impact on stimulating the creative spirit of artists, providing specially tailored galleries for the users where artists have reported to find opportunity to draw inspiration from the great abundance of a variety of sources [1]. Looking at other works of art or observing their processes may encourage creativity and motivate creation, exposure to other artists may also prove to be a great learning experience for the artist [2]. Through the following and interaction with the creators and artists on these platforms, artists may be able to find a diverse range of art styles, global art trends and new ideas, which may foster a rich environment where their creativity can flourish. The discovery of new perspectives and unconventional thinking is vital in the creation of original artworks and ideas as it removes boundaries to creativity and growth. These developing platforms have been seen to also increase accessibility and convenience, supplying free access to resources, information, and connections with other learning groups. Viewers of the artworks on these platforms may further benefit artists; advice and encouragement given by the artist's audience via interaction may allow inspiration and opportunities; word of mouth through viewers may additionally play a significant role in marketing.

Social media has democratized the art world, lowering the threshold for artistic creation and participation. Traditionally, recognition would have to be earned through complex routes of gallery exhibitions, magazines, or newspapers, which were expensive and could be inaccessible for many. Although there is still a big networking component to art, through social media, artists are provided with a variety of easier pathways to get their artwork into public view; for example, these platforms can provide a virtual gallery where artists are given an opportunity to share their process, display their portfolios or works, create a sense of community or connection, and directly reach their audiences globally, enabling a more diverse range of artists and voices to be heard.

For those who may have been previously excluded from art spaces due to gender, race, socioeconomic status, etc., social media may represent a significant opportunity to gain visibility, reach their audience and gain appreciation and support for their work. Additionally, with the availability of digital tools and educational resources such as online tutorials or workshops on platforms such as YouTube, artists are supplied with the skills necessary to progress in their artworks without having to spend money on finding access to quality information. Digital tools and resources may have also further eased this accessibility; apps and programs online allow the creation of art digitally. Consequently, formal training and access to expensive materials or spaces are no longer necessary for the creation of good art.

Despite its many favorable effects on artistic creation, social media can be seen to negatively impact the art world through the worsening of the commercialization tendencies of artistic creation, leading to the loss of artistic integrity. This commercialization is an example of capitalism, where

economic forces shape the production of art, altering it so it is no longer just a form of artistic expression but also a source of profit for the artists. This may occur when the artist prioritizes the number follows, likes, and shares in order to engage the algorithm and draw attention from the viewers. This may lead to the homogenization of styles and concepts due to the pressures to conform to standards set by the audience and a tendency to focus on the popular trends on these platforms in order to maximize profits. Consequently, the artist's original intention may lose its purity and individuality [3].

2. The Impact of Social Media on Artistic Communication

Social media may substitute for face-to-face interaction to gain social connections and opportunities for exposure. Access to social media allows for a more convenient and faster way of gaining an audience and creating these social connections. As their followers and engagement increase, more people will be exposed to their work, and opportunities for sales and exhibitions often follow. While the artist may choose to create their own website to advertise their art, present their portfolio, and provide their contact details, there is generally more traffic on social media apps, and therefore it is more efficient to present these details there. However, many artists may choose to create their own website and include it in their biographies.

The idea that social media can be seen as an ongoing portfolio of work may allow a more interactive experience for the viewers. Sales can also be made via direct messaging, which is a quicker and more informal way to buy art than a formal contract or auction. Due to its visually centered layout and vast user base, Instagram is seen as an immensely popular platform for selling art. According to Statista, approximately 74% of art buyers reported using Instagram for art-related purposes in 2022, and that number is seen to be rising [4]. Additionally, an article in Vogue magazine referred to Instagram as "the world's most talked-about new art dealer," further presenting it as something that has a significant impact on art exchange.

Some social media platforms may allow direct interaction between the artist and their audience, creating a personal connection and making the experience more engaging, creating some sense of a participatory culture [5]. Artists can respond to comments left by the viewer, take part in conversation, and hold Q&A sessions, creating a sense of community that the art world may have previously lacked. Users may feel more loyal and dedicated to their art as a result. If the artist asks questions to the viewer in the captions, the audience can also input their ideas and critiques that the artist may see and act on, making the audience feel more included in their creative process whilst also increasing the visibility of the artist through commenting [6].

Artists may also use gamification and incorporate challenges or rewards to enhance this interactivity. They may use features on the platforms such as polls, challenges such as DTIYs, and tutorials. Gamification may create a sense of connection with the viewer, boost engagement, and allow the viewer to feel more in control. Interactive posts may aid the artist in learning more about the desires their audience may have, acting as a content marketing strategy. For example, utilizing polls may be a quick way to learn and gain some insight into who their audience is. Additionally, these posts may encourage the audience to spend more time on the artist's profile, allowing the algorithm to recognize the quality of their content and suggest it to other users, increasing visibility.

Nonetheless, social media may still have a negative impact on artistic communication. Competition on social media platforms such as Instagram is especially fierce [7], as the artist will have to compete with every other artist on the app. Artists may become desperate to quickly grab the viewers' attention as quickly as possible; the internet has also reduced its users' attention span to 8 seconds, transforming how people may consume art. Instead of searching for deeper meaning in artworks, users may focus on finding artworks that they consider aesthetically pleasing. These platforms center on likes, comments, and followers, which may promote superficiality and

‘instagrammable’ artwork due to the focus on validation from users based on the external appearance of the artworks. The artist may then feel pressured to create certain artworks for approval and prevent themselves from pushing themselves further [8].

Not only through social media, advertisement and even news coverage have become very visually driven. The emphasis on striking artworks in this age may overshadow the underlying conceptual elements, leading to an appreciation of the artwork’s visual appeal rather than the deeper meaning of its content. Artwork presented on social media also often lacks an explanation of the context which traditional art venues may provide, leading to a shallow understanding of the work.

Superficial art may lack emotional depth, purpose, technical skill, impact, and originality. These artworks lack the ability to have a real effect on the viewers due to a disconnection from any social issues, cultural themes, or their personal stories. They will not push any boundaries or show any unconventional thinking or new perspectives. This may take away any deep forms of communication in art.

3. Conclusion

To conclude, the positive impact of social media on art has allowed a democratized access to art, fostered interactive experiences, stimulated creativity, and expanded the reach of the artist to an audience around the globe. However, the negatives of social media’s impact should not be ignored. From the focus on engagement metrics and trends to short attention spans and limited interaction, social media may encourage art exchange to be superficial and provide an immediate sense of gratification. These commercial pressures make the art of exchange more transactional and less about meaningful connections.

While pursuing footfall, the artist must not allow the nature of social media platforms to dilute their artistic integrity and stay true to their unique style, vision, and values. Rather than prioritizing likes and views, the artists should place stress on showcasing their honest work, where their artistic vision is not compromised by the views and effects of external factors.

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