

Art and Technology: An Old Relation and A New Normal

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Abstract

The amalgamation of Art and Technology is synonym of the rare combination of beauty and brain. But whenever these two bi-poles meet each other, it creates history. The whole art history as well as contemporary scenario are filled with it. Starting from the first four civilizations of the world i.e; Indus Valley Civilization, Chinese Civilization, Mesopotamian Civilization and Early Egyptian Civilization, the artists have been collaborating with their Contemporary civilization/s to make an art piece. History witnesses that the fusion of Science with Art is very much needed to create masterpiece. The following paper is all about this only. It narrates the story of the transition of Art and Technology. How technology effected or affected art forms of different eras, can be witnessed in this paper.

Keywords: Lost Wax Process, Indus Valley Civilization, Impressionism, Installation, Printmaking, Contemporary Art, New Media Art.

Introduction

Art can be defined as the "Representation of Imagination and Observation through any medium on any surface with an aesthetic sense". And Technology can be defined as the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes.



Figure 1: Terracotta Sculpture, Indus Valley Civilization

Art and Technology are very much related to each other. Very interestingly, this is not a new phenomenon. Normally people consider technology as a new and modern term but it is not. From the ancient age of the world, the art was made with the influence and help of its contemporary technology. The field of art is filled with numerous examples of such cases. The Relation of Art with technology can broadly be classified in three parts.

1. Art which depicts Technology.
 2. Art influenced by the Technology.
- And
3. Art made with the use of Technology.

Art Which Depicts Technology

From the very beginning, artists tried to show the contemporary as well as futuristic technologies through their art. Depiction of Bullock Cart from the terracotta sculptures and practice of pot making and metal casting with the use of lost wax process in one of the oldest civilizations of the world known as Indus Valley Civilization which was around 5000 years ago from now. It shows the close relation between art and technology of that very time. The legacy continues with the sketches of Flying Machines by Leonardo Da Vinci at the time of High Renaissance (14th century), Paintings of Turner in the era of Romanticism (18th Century) and so on. Leonardo imagined a design which could be infused with the technology to

make something which would wonder for the world. And, this happened. Later Wright-Brothers made a plane.



Figure 2: Dancing Girl, Bronze, Indus Valley Civilization

When the world was moving towards industrialization and the engineering started showing it's wonder to the world then art also changed. Unlike idealistic and religious artworks of Renaissance, theatrical expressions of Baroque and the beauty of Rococo, Turner selected trains and ships as his subjects. It was clear and very much reflective of how the technology and its bi-products are attracting artists and are being reflected in their artworks.



Figure 3: Sketch of Leonardo Da Vinci Art influenced by the Technology

The close and real interaction with technology and art can be traced when the camera was invented. That was the invention through which art was effected as well as affected. Its first encounter happened with the impressionists. Where in one hand Manet and Degas were making their compositions after taking inspirations from snapshots, in another hand Monet was trying to compete with the speed of the camera (ability to capture any picture in fraction of second). After understanding the science behind the camera, Monet started capturing light and creating

impressions in his paintings whereas Seurat was concentrating on the philosophy of colour mixing and resultant illusions.



Figure 4: A Bar at the Folies-Bergère by Manet

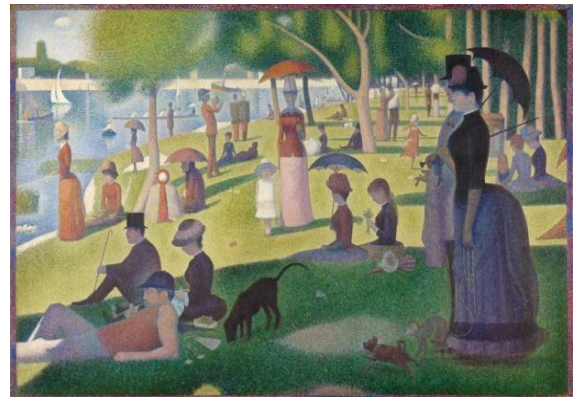


Figure 5: A Sunday on La Grande Jatte by Seurat

Impressionism and Pointillism which is also known as Neo-Impressionism are the by-products of the amalgamation of Art and Technology.

Art Made with the Use of Technology

Printmaking has been started from the early days only. Durer used to do etching on metal Plates and Japanese wood cut prints have very old legacy but Oleographic prints of Raja Ravi Varma in India in 19th Century and around 80-90 years later Andy Warhole's Serigraphy in America are the best examples of further and advanced use of technology in Art.

Once we will look at the new era installations, assemblage and different contemporary forms of art across the world, it is difficult to find the artworks which are untouched with the technology.



Figure 6: Marilyn Monroe, Serigraphy by Andy Warhol.



Figure 7: Radha Vilas, Oleography by Raja Ravi Varma

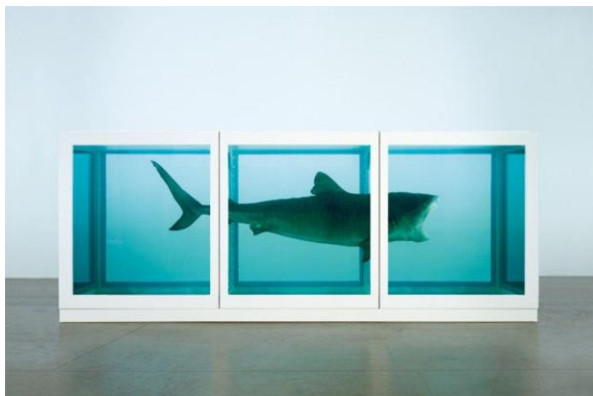


Figure 8: Jumping the Shark by Damien Hirst



Figure 9: Installation by Anish Kapoor



Figure 10: Cooking up a Storm by Subodh Gupta



Figure 11: The Nemesis of Nations by Bharti Kher

Demian Hirst is using medicated liquids to preserve his animals and making very big paintings with the use of digital prints and paints, Anish Kapoor is using giant machinery support to create his amazing installations. In India, the contemporary artist Subodh Gupta is taking help of technology to create his humongous size of static and kinetic installations, Jitish Kallat is taking support of digital softwares to create his paintings, Bharti Kher is taking help of technology and have customized cutting of her Bindis through which she makes her artworks, Satadru Sovan Banduri is taking help of led lights, digital prints and laser cuttings to make his art. We have multiple examples of such kinds of artists across the world who believes that Art is no more confined to the traditional media like Canvas, colours, stones, metals and papers. It has gone beyond it and the art produced with the help of technology is the new normal. Photography, Light and sound installations, Video art etc. are few of the resultant art forms which are the by-products of the fusion of Art and Technology.



Figure 12: Painting by Jitish Kallat



Figure 13: Artwork of Satadru Sovan Banduri

Objective of the Study

The objective of the paper is to document the relation of Art and technology from early days to the contemporary era and to analyze the fact that this is going to be a new normal.

Conclusion

In 21st century when everything is moving towards automation and artificial intelligence, Art is also not untouched with these. Artists are freely taking help of technology to create something new. Creating something innovative with the help of contemporary tools should always be encouraged and appreciated. Modifying ourselves according to the new changes is very much needed and fortunately Art is openly rubbing shoulders with the technology. Future Art must be very different, creative as well as innovative.

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