

RAHUL KUMAR | ART-ITORIAL



Just the other day I was having a rather animated and intense discussion with two fellow artists on how technology is changing the way the new-gen approaches how they learn and work. The observation of one of my friends, a teacher at a Mumbai based architecture college, is from close quarters. “I was aghast when one of my students replied in a very matter-of-fact way when I asked why they prefer watching a movie than reading a book,” she shared. Any guesses? It is sad and simple - “One has to imagine too much while reading a book! Something that is easily provided in a film.” This phenomenon is applicable to consuming just about anything, especially in the creative space. The biggest joy of seeing art, for instance, is its discovery and interpretation. And if this very thing about it is the pain-point, then little can be done. As an artist with clay as my medium of choice, I know that there is absolutely no escape to dirtying my hands! I cannot avoid babysitting a kiln over a twelve-hour long firing process, and if it is forty-five degrees in the peak of summer, then so be it.

The process of art production itself varies widely, most requiring tedious and meticulous renditioning. There are however art practices that utilize the ready-made as components for the work they create. Is the objective to simplify the very process of making art? While

the use of the machine-made product to make hand-made work of art itself is not new neither uncommon, in this issue we delve into the overlapping spaces of art and product, in context of architectural spaces and design processes. Marcel Duchamp used the readymade, as did the Dada artists as early as in 1910. The idea was a mockery of art by teasing and rejecting logic and reasoning, and to critically question its value in a rapidly industrialized world. “The real point of the readymade was to deny the possibility of defining art,” said Calvin Tomkins, the biographer of Duchamp. In the contemporary context, is it the functional associations of the mass-produced objects that are relevant to artists? Or is it the visual form and texture of these impersonally manufactured things? Further, we investigate the vice-versa - use of art in the mass-produced (or at-least mechanically produced, in multiples) functional products.

Johann Goethe called architecture frozen music. Dance, then, can be described as painting in motion. Sculpture, a section of prose.

Crafting (or creating) is the basis of all art. Architectural and design practices are paying more attention to aesthetics along with functionality than ever. Are the lines blurring between creative disciplines? Maybe, the lines never existed and were only a figment of our imagination.

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