

EXHIBITION TITLE: A Utopian Perception in a Dystopian Reality

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COURSE TITLE: Film and TV

Word Count: 1501 Words

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Introduction: 150 words

A Utopian Perception in a Dystopian Reality is being curated to show the impacts that are happening on the world from an economical standpoint. The curation process is designed to get the observer to reflect on how they are treating the world from a personal view and it should also get them thinking on how well others are treating the world. As always a human being will want the best from everything creating their own utopia. However, so much is sacrificed in the process of creating this utopia it doesn't work out and ends up creating the opposite... A dystopia. With everyone keeping to the same mindset it is slowly ruining the world, creating one global dystopia when others are imagining this to be the utopia they want. We are all blinded by the dream of gaining more from the world when we could be happy with what we have.

Context : 599 words

The theme that has been curated in the exhibition is very real in today's society. People have been brainwashed since the Industrial Revolution to pollute the air, the waters, and even the mind's of how we see the world. These effects have taken a toll on the earth and they have now become virtually irreversible to the point where we are seeing drastic changes in the wildlife, climate change. ETC.

Lippe says "She reads the post-humans in the text as representatives of a future that is both utopian and dystopian." (Lippe, 2017, p. 11) Meaning that people have designed this new world

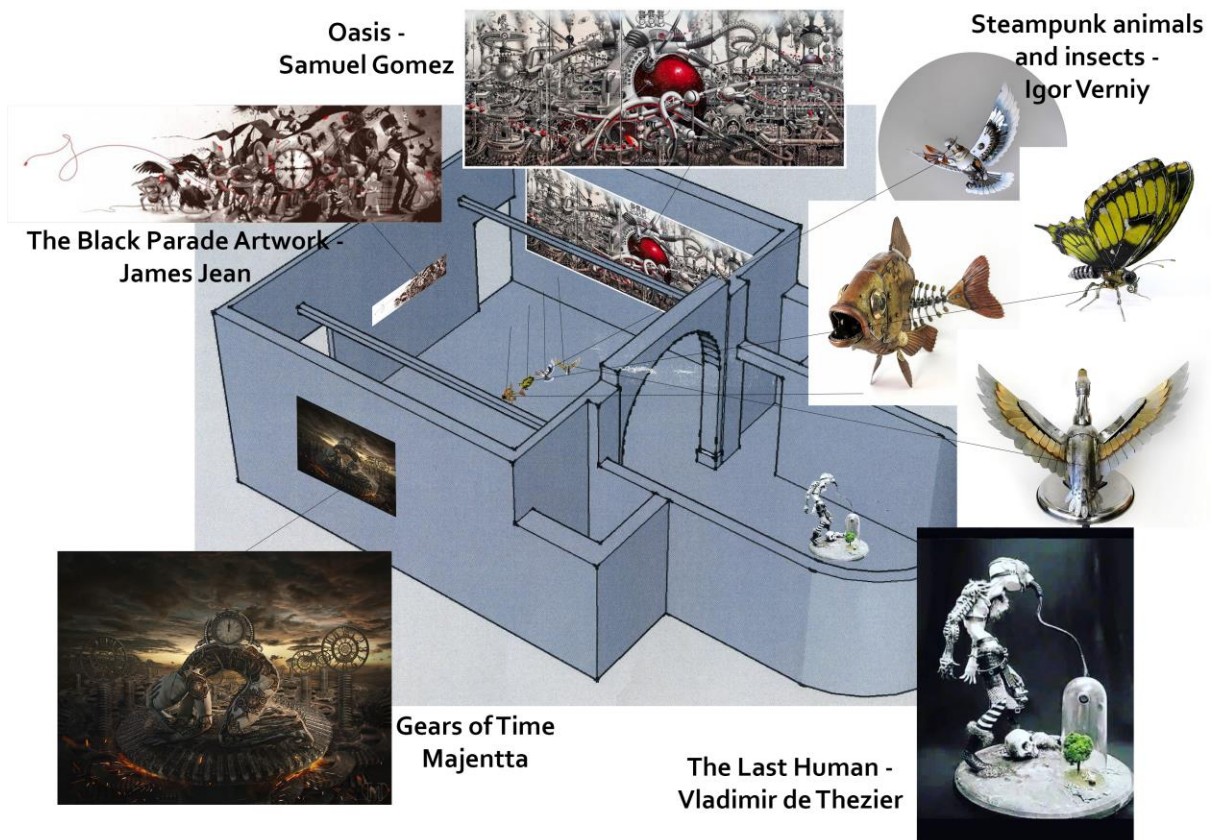
to become this new place where people will not want for anything and their lives will be great. In this sense they have built a utopia in their minds. In actual fact they have created a dystopian world where they are living in danger of ruining the place they live for future generations to come. This dystopian perception is a very scary idea too because the general human has lived through the world seeing power plants pollute the air, bags wash up in the sea, even animals cutting themselves on leftover rubbish. This is the general idea of the curatorial, the postmodernist and quite frankly steampunk/ecogothic aesthetic represents the utopia/dystopia perception of the world. It's gorgeous in the sense that the world is all shiny, gold and everyone is hard at work. However, in actual fact the people are leeching every bit of the natural resources out of the world creating this wasteland if you will.

Even before the start of the Industrial Revolution Burke said "People are not liable to be mistaken in their feelings, but they are very frequently wrong in the names they give them, and in the reasonings about them." (Burke, 1757, p. 37) This idea of people not being "liable for their mistakes" is eerily similar to the mindset people have nowadays. People have become desensitized to the point where seeing smoke coming from a steel works is normal and the waters of the sea being murky and dull is natural. No one can see how their own mistakes have led to a world that is becoming inhabitable to sustain life and soon the world won't be able to take anymore. "They are very frequently wrong in the names they give them," is also an interesting choice of words to describe what is going on right now. This was previously mentioned in the statement, "people wake up to a world where the sea is murky." Everyone looks at this now and

says “that is the sea...” But is it really? Oil gets pumped into the sea by gallons thus turning it that murky colour but people call it normal so they leave their kids swim in it, they fish from it, they even think it’s normal for the wildlife to live in it. This idea the general person has that the world is normal falls back to Lippe’s quote where people have created a utopian society in their minds but in fact they have created a dystopian world in their perception.

Each artwork and sculpture has been curated in a way to add a hard hitting parallel on the average human’s perception on the world with a striking visual to show the reality of what that perception actually is. The ecogothic/steampunk aesthetic overexaggerates the fact that people will take the natural resources for granted and thus making the world a worse place. “Virginia Woolf had clearly detected an urge. ‘Obscurely hidden in the psychology of the human race.’” (Mishra, 1994, p. 7)

Artists and artwork



Analysis of artworks selected: 752 words

The Black Parade wallpaper depicts a parade of steampunk characters travelling across the canvas from light to dark. Adding this into the curation was interesting because it really gets the idea of a utopia across because of all the grand gestures of a parade, a parade is somewhat a celebration of something so it would keep this utopian vibe going. However, it is a parade of steampunk characters wearing gasmasks and black clothing. This in itself represents decay and mourning which loops back around the idea of a dystopia. The subtle parallels Jean uses to get

this across is incredible in the details. For example, there is a ringleader who is dressed smartly, there is no stain or crease in his uniform, and he is very prominent in the artwork. On the other hand, it is a skeleton like figure who most the average person would associate as death.

De Thezier's work presents a sickly-looking human leeching every bit of energy from a tree. For what someone can interpret that it is the last tree. This is a fairly modern piece but a general date couldn't be found. However, many people have talked about it on websites such as Pinterest and Reddit so we can assume that it is a modern piece. Basing off this assumption, the artwork is talking about our man made effects on the world which ties into the utopian/dystopian feel for the exhibition. The human can be seen sucking the life out of a single tree that has been preserved. The tree looks like it is being kept inside a utopia, whereas the human is obviously living in some sort of dystopia due to the way he is dressed, his health and posture, and the environment he is standing in.

Gomez created this piece to illustrate how we are working towards a world full of machinery with no emotion to coincide with it. It ties in really well with the utopian/dystopian theme the exhibition is being curating for because it is very subjective with the way you look at it. You could see it from the utopian point of view thinking it is a painting of great potential and a free world. Whereas others would see it as a way of losing freedom to machinery. The visuals support both arguments because of the heart presented in the center of the piece. It could mean that we are

becoming machines or we are starting to put our heart into hard work. This quote by Parker sums this point up well. “We must therefore, as Garrard contends, not lose sight of the fact that ‘nature exists as both the object and, albeit distantly, the origin of our discourse.’ ” (Parker, 2020, p. 8)

These sculptures were created by Verniy, they are animals and insects made out of metals to create the steampunk vibe. They fall into the theme of utopia/dystopia because people are quick to judge the beauty of animals so by creating an elegant animal out of metal it shows that the human species doesn't have to take care of them anymore. Even if it is to the extent of taking the life out of something and just leaving the shell of it there. The beauty of the animal is still there creating the utopia, but there is no life there so that is where the dystopia comes in. “Some of the issues that are explored separately in gothic and postmodernist fiction, are one and the same, namely: Crises of identity, fragmentation of the self, the darkness of the human psyche, and the philosophy of being and knowing.” (Beville, 2009, p. 53)

This final piece depicts a human structure leant over surrounded by clocks. People need to look at a time piece to fully understand how they have taken the world for granted. How long do they think they can get away with it until the world starts looking like it does in the image? Linking in with the feeling of utopia/dystopia, the world is grand and is running smoothly creating a utopia. However, the dystopia would be how the structure looks in the image, it looks fed up and dismal which isn't a world someone would want to live in. “Bate suggests that what appears to be a

problem unique to today's world is merely, for lack of a better word, recycled from a few hundred years ago, years filled with both industrial progress and the inevitable destruction of the land that follows." (Smith, Hughes, 2013, p. 25)

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Figure list (In order of description)

Figure 1 – The Black Parade Wallpaper - James Jean



Figure 2 – The Last Human – Vladimir de Thezier



Figure 3 – Oasis - Samuel Gomez



Figure 4 – Steampunk Sculptures of Animals and Insects - Igor Verniy



Figure 5 – Gears of Time – Majentta

