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According to 'The Art Story' online article, the introduction of the Neo-Dada and Pop Art in post-war America created postmodernism, otherwise known as the beginning of people going against the knowledge that there's only one meaning to each individual art piece and its meaning is defined by the artist themselves, including the acknowledgement of the time period when it was created. They have also thought that it presents "multiple artistic forms...including Conceptual Art, Minimalism, Video Art, Performance art, Institutional Critique and Identity Art". In addition to this, individual perspectives of people were also important because they acknowledged that each person has a different interpretation of any artwork that is presented in front of them. To further elaborate this statement, each different movement/theme are all connected by the concept of the,

"ironical and playful treatment of a fragmented subject, the breakdown of high and low culture hierarchies, undermining of concepts of authenticity and originality and an emphasis on image and spectacle".

The important element of postmodernism is the difference between high and low art that also includes features of popular culture. For example, in Andy Warhol's artwork, 'Marilyn Diptych', it references to the challenges of the purity of modernistic aesthetic of popular culture; its repetitive feature also represents mass production as well as the diptych structure bringing awareness to the popularity of celebrities and images from Americans. There's also an "ironic play on the authenticity" which contributes towards the idea of the artists' originality of their artwork and its value within society. Furthermore, the artist also challenges the traditional boundaries between high and low art, meaning the difference between art that is highly appreciated by people with vast knowledge of creative interests and art that is easily replicated and does not have any deep meanings or purposes, therefore can be easily interpreted by anyone.

Another example would be 'Untitled (I shop therefore I am)' by Barbara Kruger, whose artwork presents juxtaposition of photographs "with aggressive or provocative slogans in a photolithograph that appropriates the direct style and visual form of mass media communication". This weakens the differences between its imagery, aesthetic and viewers for high art and advertisement. Furthermore, it overturns Rene Descartes' philosophical claim 'I think therefore I am', suggesting that materialistic value is more important than individual value, therefore represents the person's identity or in more basic terms: "what you buy not your inner life makes you who you are". Overall, it represents an individual's value and identity through items and labels they physically possess rather than what is under the surface.

The 'Artlex' article further elaborates that postmodernism is an artistic movement that happened between 1960s to 1990s that rejected the common opinions and standards of modern art and realism. It's often associated with philosophical critique that went against categorisation that used popular culture to inspire artistic creations. They further explain that each individual artwork is an "individual reflection of the artist and art history" and that it came from outdated and elitist views. The movement occurred during the time when there was a rise in feminism, civil rights and LGBTQ rights with additional features of popular culture. Influential artists are considered to be examples such as Andy Warhol, Carolee Schneemann, Maria Abramovic, Barbara Kruger, Cindy Sherman, Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst. Each artist "challenged universal truths, blurring the line between fine art and popular culture, using mass produced goods, magazines, television and movies as influence" using their artworks through different kinds of media such as photography, sculptures and collages.

Furthermore, they “embraced collage, assemblage, montage, bricolage, text, appropriation and simplification of art” by using past styles, themes and ideas and reworking them into artworks with the postmodern style.

Andy Warhol originally worked as an illustrator for print magazines as well as advertising, which led to his artwork being influenced by “mass produced commercial goods that were part of modern society and everyday life”. For example, his artwork ‘Marilyn Diptych’ represents “the fact that movie stars were worshipped like God”, as shown through the multiple repetition of the portrait in different variations of colour schemes on a single frame image, as discussed previously.

Jeff Koons presented his postmodern style through sculpture artworks such as his well-known Banality Collection that features Michael Jackson with his pet monkey Bubbles, released in 1988. It was “painted in gold to highlight Jackson as a god-like icon, similar to Byzantine art” which also shares similarities to Andy Warhol’s perspective of seeing the public placing celebrities on the top tier of the social hierarchy. To further add to this piece, Koons claims “the triangular composition of this work...came from the High Renaissance and Michelangelo’s ‘Pieta’ ”; another example to show that they were influenced by styles from the artistic past.

Damien Hirst showcases his take on the postmodernism style through a “provocative” way and addresses the issues of religion, science and death.

Cindy Sherman uses mostly photography, as seen in one of her artwork collections ‘History Portraits’ (1954 - current); this is a collection of feminist art to illustrate “women in history through the eyes of the female artist”. She achieves this by using herself as the main subject in famous paintings such as ‘Untitled 209’ where she presents herself as the Mona Lisa and in ‘Untitled 228’ she’s seen as Judith. This was created in order to cause viewers “to take a closer look at how the familiarity of the original art is captured with a modern twist”, another example of using historic artwork with popular culture references.

Barbara Kruger also uses photography but combines this with text and collage; to be more elaborate, she uses “layered black and white photography and collage works combined with bold coloured text” which is later recognised as her iconic or common artistic style. Her work is to raise awareness on social and gender commentary.

Frank Gehry (1929 – current) is a Canadian artist that showcases his style of postmodernism through architecture. For example, his work ‘Guggenheim Museum Bilbao’ located in Spain was considered a masterpiece in postmodernism architecture because he uses “deconstructivism” to create a “form following fantasy”.

In conclusion, I’ve learnt that Postmodernism can be shown through various forms and media, for example the way it’s expressed through combinations of traditional media with modern references and how artists choose not to limit their creativity to express it on a flat surface in forms like architectural structures and sculptures. It’s a lot more in depth and has many references and features often with traces of common basic interpretations. This research shows that combining modern and traditional media can be used for expressing and addressing important issues such as feminism and social hierarchy within the public perspective. This will help me understand and create art in a complex way that can present numerous but different perspectives and interpretations that has the potential of expressing awareness of major issues.

References:

<https://www.theartstory.org/definition/postmodernism/>

<https://www.artlex.com/art-movements/postmodernism/>