

TITLE: To what extent are different types of art and imagery effective in striving for change in today's society, and how works of art are best illustrated for maximum effect in shaping people's perceptions?

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Programme of study: BA Photography in the arts

Word Count: 6,17

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INTRODUCTION

Pieces of art express many ideas and emotions; Art is a form of communication, each painting, photograph, sculpture, installation etc., has its own unique qualities and meanings which affect us in different ways depending on what we believe. The term 'Art' is very broad and peoples' opinions on what art is often differ. However, its purpose is mainly to communicate ideas that are for example politically or philosophically motivated, creating work from every area such as personal stories, beliefs, feminism, today's society, to the environment. Art influences the way people in today's society view the world by changing opinions, instilling values and showing experiences, allowing people from different backgrounds, ages, cultures and religions to communicate with each other using images, sculptures, sounds and stories which often act as a tool for social change.

This enquiry seeks to explore how different types of art are more or less effective in striving for change. How can works of art and imagery illustrating some of the world's biggest issues shape the way today's society perceive and act upon them? Also, what is more effective: documented imagery or more abstract and aesthetically-pleasing art? It also seeks to investigate where this imagery should be displayed to be most effective.

CHAPTER ONE – STREET ART

The use of photography has become very dominant, and photographs are everywhere we go, from advertisements, signs and packaging to social media platforms such as *Instagram*, where many people become addicted to posting photographs of their lives, from what they did last night, where they are in the world to what they just ate.

Climate change is one of the biggest issues affecting millennials today, as is large-scale conflict and inequality. Global warming is getting worse and many have started to realise the effects that it is having on our planet. However, as it does not affect the way they live their lives yet, there are also many people do not take any notice, abusing luxuries such as driving everywhere and the use of power plants and steel works.

According to scientists the world is warming faster than ever, every one of the last 40 years has been warmer than the average temperature that should be recorded in the 20th century. We are overloading our atmosphere with carbon dioxide, which traps heat and steadily drives up the planet's temperature. This carbon comes from fossil fuels we burn for energy. As a result, sea levels are rising, heat waves and storms are becoming more regular and wildfires are growing.

One approach to creating images on the topic of global warming is political and street art. The work of Banksy is a good example as he combines street art with his distinctive stencilling technique, making work on street corners, buildings, and anywhere appropriate for the message he wants to make throughout towns and cities as he creates bold political statements on the conflicts and problems in today's society. From social media to political views, environment etc. Banksy's images are powerful and often a tourist attraction to people who like his work as he paints over the walls of many cities all over the world, many people see his work and political statements get spread across many different countries which is hugely successful in changing the way people see. It also acts as a reminder that we need to take action on these worldwide issues. However, Banksy's work is very opinionated and confrontational, which could cause people to dislike and avoid it if they disagree with the meaning behind it.

"Your mind is working at its best when you're being paranoid. You explore every avenue and possibility of your situation at high speed with total clarity." (Banksy, 2001)



Figure 1: Banksy, *I don't believe in global warming*, 2009



Figure 2: Banksy, *Pledging to plastic*, 2008

Both the pieces of work above are by Banksy, both addressing climate change in different ways. *I don't believe in global warming* is a powerful piece, as the bold red writing of a strong statement is aimed at one of the most powerful people in the world, Donald Trump. In 2018 Trump was asked outside the White House about the findings that unchecked global warming would wreak havoc on the US economy, and he said: "I don't believe it." (Trump, 2018) Trump on many occasions when asked about the issues of climate change has said he does not believe and has called it a hoax. In November 2016 Trump tweeted: "The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S manufacturing non-competitive." (Trump, 2012) This statement speaks for itself: "As soon as he took office, Trump embarked on a mission to undo most of the environmental and climate

safeguards that had been put in place by his predecessor president Barack Obama.”

(Medium, 2018.)

Banksy took it upon himself to create what looks like a mockery of Trump, as he writes the statement on the side of a building with water covering half of ‘Global warming’, sarcastically indicating that sea levels are rising and global warming is something that he feels strongly about. This piece also conveys a sense of worry, as if to say, ‘if this is what a president believes, then we must act now more than ever’. However, this work would not be effective if it was viewed by Trump or anyone who agrees with the statement and would totally dismiss it. On the other hand, young activist Greta Thunberg who fights for action on climate change, creating school strikes, would thrive for things like this piece by Banksy, as it is a wake-up call that climate change is going on. She strikes back at the American president by saying; “The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say – we will never forgive you.” (Thunberg 2019).

The second *Pledging to plastic* piece by Banksy shows three young children pledging to what looks like an American flag but is in fact a plastic Tesco carrier bag acting as the American flag. This is a very effective piece of work, turning people's attention toward plastic pollution while simultaneously creating a strong message that America is turning plastic. The amount of plastic found in the sea is increasing dramatically and the use of the Tesco bag illustrates this perfectly. Also, the children looking up to it address that there is no future for our children which could have a profound effect on many people who see this piece.

Some of Banksy's work is reminiscent of photomontage, making invisible social relations visible which is often used in advertising, and Banksy uses this technique as he advertises political and environmental views. An advantage of a photomontage originally suggested by John Berger and agreed by author Silvano Levy;

"The fact that everything which has been cut out keeps its familiar photographic appearance. We are still looking first at things and only afterwards at symbols."

(Levy, 1997p:40) This creates a naturalness about the message being constructed in the image.



Figure 3: Darren Aronofsky & JR, *The Standing March* 2015

Again, like Banksy, the work above has a similar approach, combining social issues with street art. This piece is by French urban photographer and artist JR, and

American filmmaker Darren Aronofsky, *The Standing March*. JR's work challenges widely held preconceptions by advertising and the media, he combines art and action and deals with freedom, limits, identity and commitment. JR often displays politically charged work around built up and busy environments, posting large scale black and white images on buildings, subways etc. This artist combines many powerful social statements through large portraits and murals. As the writer Liz Wells has said:

Large scale photographic works assert their presence and, therefore, the significance of their theme or subject matter. Such pictures engage with contemporary myth in ways that echo the ideological and political involvement. (Wells, 2015)

The aim of his work is to spread the message and change the world's perspectives one step at a time as he exhibits all over the world in some of the most populated cities. *The Standing March* addresses climate change and the short film made in collaboration with Aronofsky was made in 2015 at the time the United Nations conference was taking place in Paris. UN's climate conference was a huge meeting between world leaders to try to come to an agreement on how to stop the rapid increase and to cap greenhouse emissions. The film was made up of over 500 video portraits of people from different backgrounds and ethnicities. All of the people involved in the filming were filmed separately and every individual is filmed from the side and slowly moves their heads right, so they look directly into the camera. Aronofsky describes in their video about the work: "It's somehow to symbolize people are watching and everyone on this building and everyone in the world is watching to see what our diplomats do and hopefully they make a change." (Aronofsky, 2019).

Once every individual's video was made, JR created a massive audience and fading crowd of people who all slowly turn their heads at the same time, leaving them to stare at whoever is watching. This huge installation was projected onto the front of the Assemblée Nationale building as a form of silent protest. This work is particularly powerful as at this time protests were not allowed in Paris, so this projection was a clever way to grip hold of the world as the conference was going on. As most protests are marches, strikes, or sit-ins, with signs out in full force, this approach is quiet and arguably more effective, as you are not being shouted at or forced to be onboard but rather offered a subtle reminder that the mass of the world's population relies on these world leaders for change. The huge scale of it forces people to stop what they are doing and watch, one of the most effective ways for art to be viewed. Famous for his quote, JR says "the streets are the largest art gallery in the world." (JR, 2009)

CHAPTER TWO – DOCUMENTARY PRACTICE

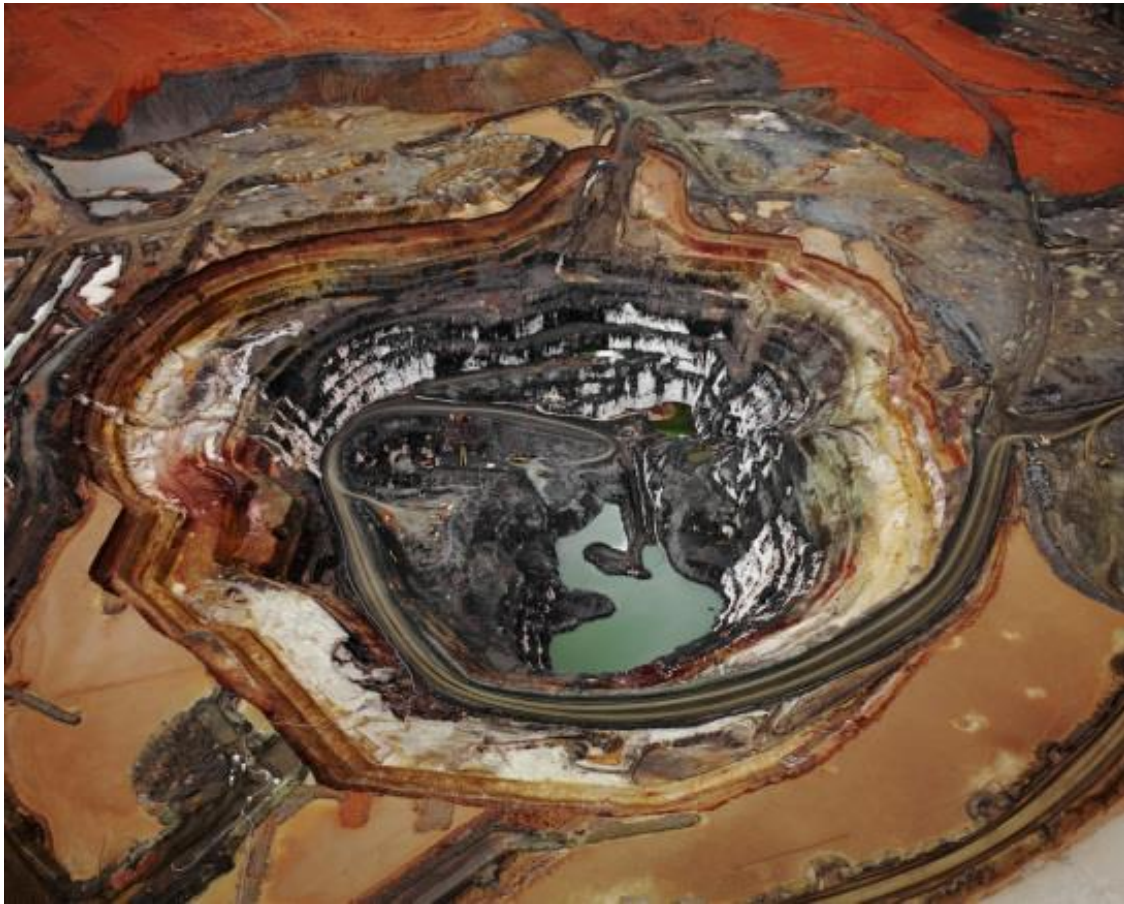


Figure 4: Edward Burtynsky, *Silver Lake Operations*, 2007

Environmental pollution can be photographed in many ways, such as more of a documentary approach as opposed to street art. Canadian photographer Edward Burtynsky often photographs aerial views of polluted land. *Manufactured Landscapes* is a documentary on the world and work of Burtynsky, who makes large-scale photographs of 'manufactured landscapes' – quarries, recycling yards, factories, mines, and dams. The artist explains, "These images are meant as metaphors to the dilemma of our modern existence; they search for a dialogue

between attraction and repulsion, seduction and fear. We are drawn by desire—a chance at good living, yet we are consciously or unconsciously aware that the world is suffering for our success.” (Burtynsky, 2007)

For example, the oil series he documented in 2009. Within this series Burtynsky travelled to both North Africa and Asia exploring the current industrialisation, where oil is the primary source of energy. He photographs this toxic landscape from a height, looking down over the area where there are often masses of landfill, chemically filled streams and consumerism shown in full force. As highways in big American cities cross-over each other forming interesting patterns, every photograph is perfectly composed, overlooking the scene. Although he photographs events that are not supposed to be beautiful, many of Burtynsky’s images are sublimely memorable, pleasing and unique to look at. As an audience we are intrigued as we pass it in a gallery, convincing us to look at his work more closely, and as we do, we start to realise what the photograph is and our opinion on the image may change. Burtynsky demands us to take a look at what we as humans are doing to the world.

Silver Lake Operations was taken at Lake Lefroy in Western Australia in 2007 at a mine. The man-made tracks spiral down through the pit, aesthetically drawing the viewer in to take a closer look, with the warm fiery oranges and red tones throughout the photograph. There are many lines and patterns, which create a scene of chaos as the layers of rock overlap with sharply scraped cliff-like face, showing the destruction of the natural land. However, at first glance it would be difficult to know

what is happening in the image, as the photograph is taken from such a height that the area of land shown is vast. Being zoomed out, it requires looking deeply into the photograph to uncover exactly what he captures. Although this photograph's detail and patterns are gripping and intriguing, for the image to be effective in addressing the harm of industrial pollution it needs to be displayed on a massive scale, showing the true reality of it all. Also, the photograph is very picturesque, with warm tones inviting us into the image, almost like it's too beautiful to cause a feeling of panic to create action.

The political impact that photographs like Burtynsky's has been debated to some extent. For instance, Deborah Bright, mentioned in '*photography: a critical introduction*,' "the ease with which single images from series intended as investigative nonetheless could be seen as testaments to transcendent notions of nature." (Bright 1989) suggests individual photographs may be viewed as celebratory even when an overall series conveys more critical perspectives.

Burtynsky's industrial bodies of work are often automatically viewed as a cry for help and question the consequences we face during industrialisation and capitalism. However, Bright is suggesting how an individual piece by Burtynsky could be seen as a form of celebration, as the photographs are often so astonishing and aesthetically pleasing. Perhaps, therefore, many other viewers would see them as a monument to industrial success. However, landscape photographers do not only go

to places to capture them, they are also interested in capturing and enhancing the way we see by interrogating the environment.

There has been much debate relating to the notions of *the industrial sublime*. In the Eighteenth Century philosophers Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant talked of the sublime in relation to landscape, describing “the notion to that which is awesome or frightening yet, because we are experiencing it through a picture, perversely presumable, since there is no danger of pain or death as would be the case were we to encounter the actual circumstances depicted.” (Wells, 2015: p.341)

However, Burke and Kant had different ideas of the sublime. Burke believed “something is beautiful when it arouses a special aesthetic feeling in us” (Velasquez, 2007: p.641), whereas the sublime is something that has the power to compel us. He believed beauty is a form of delicacy, whilst the sublime has the power to create the feelings of fear but says astonishment is the answer. This emotion arises whilst looking at Burtynsky’s work, as we begin to realise that the image is much more than what we think at first glance. This has great effectiveness due to the fact that it contains both Burke’s ideas of beauty and the sublime, as he creates often aesthetically pleasing and well composed images but leaves the fear. We feel for what our world is going to be in years to come through the abuse of industrialisation. Although this statement could be argued against, Kant criticized the view of Burke for not understanding the mentality that comes with beauty and the sublime as he writes;

To make psychological observations, as Burke did in his treatise on the beautiful and the sublime, thus to assemble material for the systematic connection of empirical rules in the future without aiming to understand them, is probably the sole true duty of empirical psychology, which can hardly even aspire to rank as a philosophical science. (Kant, 1965: p.146)

Robert Adams wrote a book called *Beauty in Photography* and begins it by explaining “the truth in landscapes” where he mentions that a beautiful landscape ironically elicits sadness within the viewer and attractive scenes are sometimes desecrated by abused land. He believes the best images which would be successful in getting viewer attention are a record of the place, a reason behind the image such as a *personal matter* and metaphor – which holds the viewer’s interest and denotes the significance of the place, by implying “something more enduring than a specific piece of terrain.” (Eden, 2019).



Figure 5: Sebastio Salgado, *Greater Burhan Oil Field*, Kuwait, 1991

Sebastiao Salgado is also a well-known documentary photographer. After traveling to over 120 countries, his work appears in many press publications. His powerful, sharp and often chaotic black and white images capture the poor and powerless around the world, finding strength and hope in the most devastating circumstances and the atmosphere in the environments he finds himself in. The photographs are all perfectly composed full of drama and chaos really hitting the viewer as some of his images include people, even children, battling such devastation. The strong highlighted tones and contrast in detail form a metallic-like appearance to his images making certain viewpoints stand out even more. Salgado's images show the rawness and truth of the places he goes, images that are hard to dismiss.

Burtynsky's industrial images show the mass of consumerism and pollution and make us see clearly what we are doing to the world, as so few of the population ever see the world from the perspective of aerial views looking down over the environment. Although Burtynsky is popular to many in the art world, people who do not follow may never see his magnificent images as they tend to be displayed in galleries across the world. So much of the world's population do not ever visit a gallery. This is why it could be argued that work from Banksy and JR is more effective, as it is more likely to be seen by those going about their daily lives, traveling around the city centres or routinely walking to work. People have grown to love Banksy's street art and the humour that comes with it. As he paints a message of a strongly politically viewed issue, he does add an element of humour in his work, and this causes a higher number of people to interact with it, sparking discussion.

Banksy has also become popular on social media, having an Instagram account himself where he posts his latest work to his 6.7 million followers and being tagged in people's photographs of and with his work, his work has become a tourist attraction. Evidently, this is one of the most effective ways to engage viewers to act upon global warming.

The popularity of social media apps today is massive. 3.3 Billion of the world's population are online. Social media comes in many forms:

including blogs, forums, business networks, photo-sharing platforms, social gaming, microblogs, chat apps, and finally social networks. In 2019, the global social penetration rate reached 45 percent, with East Asia and North America both having the highest penetration rate at 70 percent, followed by Northern Europe at 67 percent. (Clement, 2019)

The internet has become a key element of our world, and with so many people being in touch with it, if these activist photographs and pieces of art were displayed along everybody's news feeds, then maybe the work would become far more effective in enlightening people about these environment issues in the world which we need to act upon. It could result in a better future for the planet and generations to come.

In order to grip the viewers' attention of something like global warming in today's society the image should be powerful. Being located in a gallery is fine, but not half as many people visit galleries as go online. However, some may totally disagree, whilst reading *Photography: A Critical Introduction* by Liz Wells, she mentions that photographers like Sebastião Salgado exhibit their work in galleries before

reproducing them as books, while photographers increasingly find different kinds of commercial and cultural spaces. She states “The globalisation of news and the demand for information around the clock has changed the organisational structure of magazines and newspapers and brought out about a new division of labour” (Wells: 2015 p129.) This means photographers are becoming less employable and the convenience of digital cameras makes it easy for print journalists to send images directly.

Professor of photography David Bate mentions in his book that “Manipulation of press images by the computer has transferred power away from the photographer and to the picture editor who increasingly controls the nature of what is seen.” (Bate, 2001). This may suggest why photographers stray away from newspapers and display their work in a gallery setting instead.

The stock photography industry is dominated today by four firms: Getty images, Carbis, Shutterstock and Fotolia. This is another area of photography which does not record an event’s existence or does not constitute advertising - stock photography. Getty Images is an American visual media company, which supplies stock images, editorial photography, video and music for business and consumers holding over 200 million assets. It targets three markets, advertising and graphic design professionals, the media, and corporate (in-house design, marketing and communication departments). Getty has distribution offices around the world and capitalizes on the Internet for distribution. Getty has also digitized older photographs

and archival collections, furthering online distribution even more. A large commercial website is being run that clients use to search and browse for images, purchase usage rights, and download images.

This is a good way to view images under a topic as online images are now very accessible and most if these images are found by big company names such as Virgin who purchase an image to use as an advertisement or to promote their company. Also, big organisations that focus on climate change use images from Getty which contain multiple meanings making it reusable in spreading the message of global warming and aiming to make a change in people's opinions. However, many criticize companies like Getty for not being 'real' enough.

These images, according to David Machin "can be spotted easily: they are those bright, airy images showing attractive models, rich colour, flat, and a blank background. And they are recognisable less than realistic." (Machin 2004:p241) He argues the main purpose of these kinds of images are that the more generic they are, the more likely they are to get money from the amount of purchases made.

“The spectacle is the stage at which the commodity has succeeded in totally colonizing social life. Commodification is not only visible; we no longer see anything else; the world we see is the world of commodity.” (Debord 1967: p.241)



Figure 6: Paul Souders, Getty Images, *Polar Bear*, Repulse Bay, Nunavut, Canada

It may seem as if Getty images are not as genuine as individual photographers that exhibit in galleries such as Burtynsky, as they hope to produce reusable images in the hope of selling. On the topic of climate change, the individuals that I have mentioned have produced more genuine images, where the artist behind it really feels a need for changes and changing the opinion of others. Whereas Getty images on climate change are powerful and if used as an advert could turn people's heads

tremendously, however, they are there to be purchased and reused, losing the sense of a personal feeling and truth. The image above, a picture taken from the Getty images website, shows a polar bear that seems to be stranded on a small island of ice. The image is taken from an angle that floats along the sea staring up at the bear, this image is upsetting and makes you think about how these animals are losing their habitats and will eventually struggle to exist. Ice is melting at a rapid pace and without images like this we'd dismiss it. Also using an animal within such a harsh situation may trigger the feeling of sympathy as it's not the animals' fault, people often warm to them and feel sorry for them more as its our actions that cause it.

However, the sky is calming and beautiful with warm tones of pink and orange as they reflected on the smooth, darker toned sea, the image seems too aesthetic and calming, going against the reality of global warming that people should see.

Referencing back to David Machin, it could be argued that the more dramatic and chaotic images are, the more they will change people's actions towards global warming. Others may disagree, such as Mat Carlson who says "acknowledging news as a subjective cultural practice shaped by naturalized conventions. Such drama does not always exist." (Carlson 2009).

CHAPTER THREE – THE ABSTRACT

Documentary is one of the most powerful forms of photography to instantly grab your attention to a crisis, as direct images create an obvious sense of what you are looking at. Abstract imagery may not initially grab you, although when we find out the

underlying concept, what the art means, it can sometimes have an even bigger effect.

“Colour is a power which directly influences the soul.” (Kandinsky, 2011p435).

For instance,

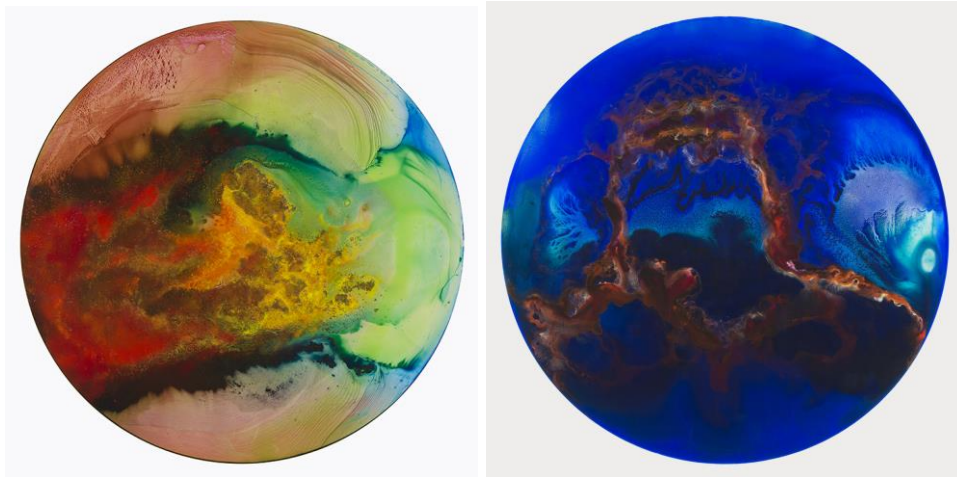


Figure 7 & Figure 8: John Sabraw, '*Chroma*', 2016

Artist John Sabraw is a contemporary artist, activist and environmentalist who produces eco conscious installations. He has collaborated with scientists throughout many of his projects. One of his current projects involves creating paintings from iron oxide extracted in the process of remediating polluted streams, such as this series of paintings located above which is titled *Chroma*. The series consists of circular, abstract paintings, that are made with pigments from the toxic chemicals that pollute the coal-mining region of Ohio.

Sabraw created these mysterious paintings alongside chemist Guy Riefler, his paint-making partner at Ohio University. Using toxic runoff from the Ohio River region, Sabraw produces his own coloured pigments that consist of vibrant yellows and reds, created from the oxidized sludge of abandoned coalmines, supplied by Rifer. When making his paint colours he taps into the water's heavy metals left over from

abandoned coalmines, representing the region's pollution problem in the process.

These images also give the impression of the world and its future, our land and sea covered with toxic substances. The deep red that he produces indicates warning and warming, and the deep blues give a sad atmosphere, possibly indicating a bleak future that is creeping upon us.

"The artist, like the scientist, has a crucial role to perform in our society," Sabraw told HuffPost. " "See things differently, act on this vision, report the failures and successes."- (Sabraw, 2019.)

Sabraw is a great example of an activist artist. Ohio has abandoned underground coal mines that produce iron and acid waste, creating a toxic, orange substance that contaminates rivers and kills wildlife. The moment the water is exposed to air, the iron oxidizes and turns into an orange sludge that taints the river's surroundings. Riefler's process removes pollutants from stream waters, but the pigments he produces can be sold to fund the stream's clean-up, a form of activism.

"I was struck by the amazing colour and wondered if I could work with them. I quickly discovered that environmental engineer Guy Riefler was already using the runoff to make paint, and he asked me to join him." (Sabraw, 2016)

Guy Riefler plans to build an on-site treatment plant at a stream in Truetown, Ohio, that would treat one million gallons of polluted water and produce up to two tons of pigment daily.

Throughout Sabraw's *Chroma* series these images look beautiful and delicate, the bright and colourful paintings with related colours such as warm and cold, merging and running into each other like ink or the effect of spilling oil attracts the viewers'

attention as we are so often drawn to beauty. Located in a gallery, it would catch the eyes of many individuals. However, once the viewer has researched or read a description alongside the work, a feeling of shock and amazement will hit as we soon realize that what we thought was a form of beauty and elegance, is actually something toxic and disgusting.

‘Sabraw’s work as an artist and activist proves a great truth, something that most of us fail to recognize: Beauty is everywhere. When we come together as one, whether contemplating the meaning of artwork or considering how to tackle pollution, beauty rises up from under the murky waters.’

Sabraw’s *Chroma* is a clever way of instantly grabbing one’s attention, tricking people into thinking his paintings are beautiful and pleasing to look at but when looked into it’s the opposite that’s discovered, this also makes the piece more memorable and that feeling of shock will leave people alert to the waste that is being produced and ending up in streams. On the other hand, Sabraw then goes on to explain, “But that is not to say that toxic river sludge is beautiful, beauty is found in the removal of pollution, not in pollution itself”. (Sabraw, 2016)

Abstract and impressionist artist Arshile Gorky also agrees with this form of alerting awareness as he states:

Abstraction allows man to see with his mind what he cannot see physically with his eyes.... Abstract art enables the artist to perceive beyond the tangible, to extract the infinite out of the finite. It is the emancipation of the mind. It is an exploration into unknown areas. (Gorsky, 2005)

Another example of expressing climate change through a form of abstraction is Danielle Eubank, a painter who explores the relationship between abstraction and realism.

Eubank created a series *One Artist Five Oceans*, a project that consisted of twenty years of her sailing over the five oceans, painting the waters of each ocean on Earth. This body of work caps her decades-long mission to paint every ocean in order to help raise awareness about the state of the oceans and climate change. She titles this project *One Artist Five Oceans* however, she categorises this into five parts, titling each series of images with the name of the ocean it came from. On her website she then writes about her feeling and experience within that ocean.

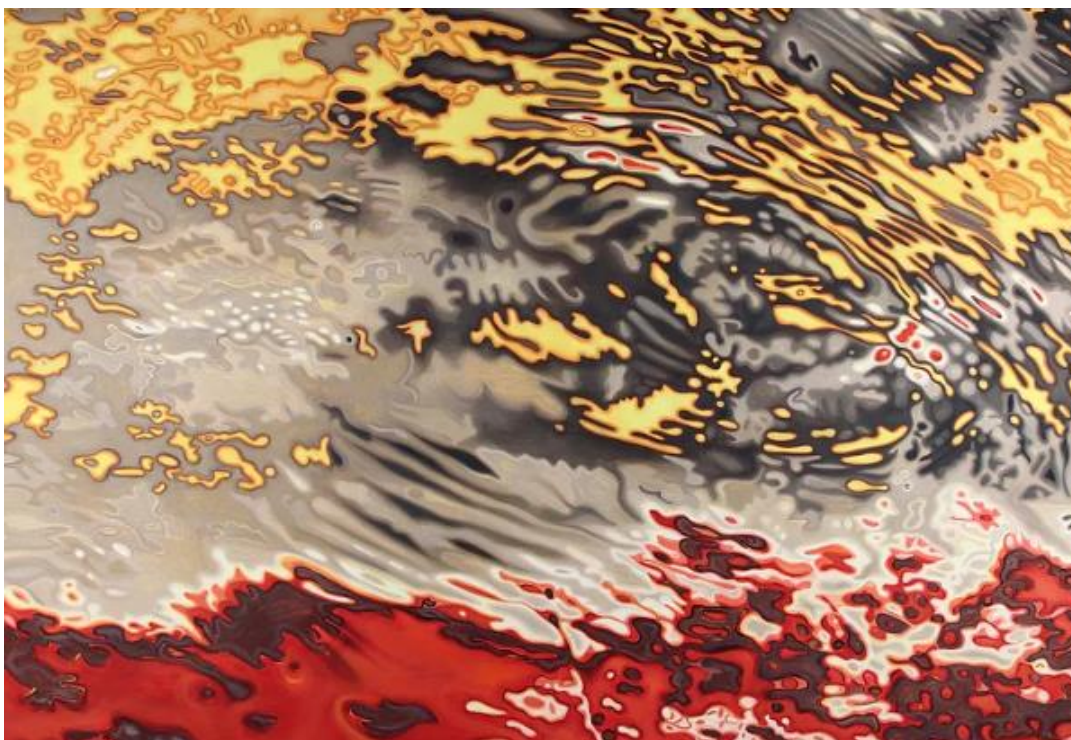


Figure 8: Danielle Eubank, *Mozambique IX*, *One Artist Five Oceans*, 2015.

Eubank's oil paintings are abstract, although sometimes appear realistic as we get a clear sense of the water as she copies the swirls and shapes of the reflection bouncing off the ocean, especially in the Pacific, where there is a lot going on and a mixture of reds, yellows and blues in one image with high contrast and noisy tones. The image above is of the Indian Ocean, where she paints a lot of warm colours reflecting the temperatures. Eubank also paints at night, painting small reflections of orange lights reflecting on the darkness of the sea, showing human contact and light pollution. As for this image, she also captures the oil and scum of the polluted waters, an act from us humans that we do not often see. Again, like John Sabraw she is creating beautiful-looking scenes, which however, have an ugly story. When oceans come to mind many of us automatically think of clear blue water, so when we see paintings like this where the water is toxic, it alerts us to the pollution in the world.



Figure 9: Danielle Eubank, Arctic I, *One Artist Five Oceans*, 2015.



Figure 10: Danielle Eubank, *Arctic X*, *One Artist Five Oceans*, 2015.

In contrast to the Pacific and Indian Oceans, the Arctic Ocean has far less human activity, resulting in more pure waters. Eubank describes it as the most abstract ocean, “With the Arctic Ocean, I am painting the most abstract waterscape I have ever seen. Normally, I deconstruct the physical forms found in water to create stacks of abstracted rhythms. In this case, the Arctic Ocean already looks abstract before I’ve had a chance to deconstruct it.” (Eubank, 2019) She also mentions how in places rarely visited by people the animal life sometimes does not express fear in the same way as in areas where humans are a threat. This is a reminder of humankind’s effect upon the environment. Also, the pieces of floating ice indicate the melting of ice caps and rising of sea levels.

Eubank aims for a deeper emotive evocation, matching natural forms of water with motifs reminiscent of found obstacles in the Pacific Northwest. As she describes “it’s

about creating a deeper connection between human culture and our natural surroundings.” (Eubank, 2019). She explains what draws her to her unique subject, “Water is both universal and personal. There is one ocean, and we all share it.” Her portraits of water indeed create an instant feeling of nostalgia and collective recognition. Eubank’s work also seeks to raise awareness about our effect on the climate and oceans. The artist hopes viewers will see the beauty, and fragility, in the bodies of water she depicts.

This way of expressing the worldwide issue of climate change is effective as it lets your mind run away with the patterns, tones and colour within the piece. As with the series *Chroma*, with *One Artist Five Oceans*, what you see is not an obvious picture documenting the issue, but something surreal and mysterious in character.

However, everyone thinks differently, and just as this kind of work could affect and dig into someone’s emotions, others may not be affected at all by what they see. For example, they may not like the look of the image and therefore not read into it and completely ignore it. As this way of addressing climate change is very subjective and dependant of what the viewer sees as interesting or attractive, at first glance abstraction is probably the least successful method, but the most effective once understood as that sense of shock when discovering the ugliness of the world in what seems to be a beautiful piece of art, helps to alert people to strive for change.

“Art is a little subversive, very subversive; it gets underneath the surface and reveals what is there; it is a Geiger counter for truth.” (Allen, 2005: p.28)

CONCLUSION

Documentary images are very effective for advertising and raising awareness as what you see is what you get, these images are real and hard to ignore. Often documenting scenes of climate change includes harsh realities, getting straight to the point such as starving, suffering children and animals struggling to exist. This can be a vicious wake up call and by seeing these types of images we begin to think about the consequences of our actions and more people will slightly change their actions to help.

More politically driven works, like those created by Banksy, are also powerful. The way he paints on street corners of highly populated places targets an instantly wider audience than, for example, a piece placed in an art gallery. All kinds of people pass and with Banksy's work being so famous it is hard to ignore. Expressing a straightforward, often politically driven message, with the humour that he feeds into his work makes his work more popular as he interacts with people, who see this and want to act. Banksy is also careful and selective in where he chooses to work, such as *I don't believe in global warming* where he writes the statement on the side of a building with water covering half of the words 'global warming', sarcastically indicating that sea levels are rising and global warming is something that he feels strongly about. This is one of the most beneficial ways of alerting someone to global warming, with the work being displayed through the streets people walk past every day. People with differing opinions, ages, perspectives, even just a glance could spark a thought about what that individual can do to help. This tactic would only be an ineffective way of pleading for help with individuals that do not agree with the message that Banksy illustrates (if Donald Trump saw this image, for example).

The earth's temperature is increasing year by year, by 2030 climate change could no longer be reversible. A scary thought; most of us are oblivious to the fact we are destroying the planet and individuals are not doing enough to help. The convenience of things like plastic, transport, electricity has become completely normalized today and we abuse these luxuries especially in MEDCs, as most of the time there is no need due to there being easy alternatives. For instance: driving short distances, overuse of plastic, and constant running electricity. For comfortable and easier lives, we consume and consume, discarding things that are broken without considering the implications.

Photographs can provide direct evidence that global warming is happening, all over the world. It's important to document this massive global change in order to spread awareness and provoke political discussion before climate change does become irreversible. When people see these images in campaigns, galleries or through advertisements, hopefully it will alert them to change the little things within their lifestyle in order to help the environment which is now being hit hard with pollution. A change so little to one person when done by billions can have a massive impact, this is what these images aim to do.

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