

Research in context

To Analyse the impact of the environment and sustainability on art practice by describing how artists have responded to these issues in their work.

I will be diving into the sustainability of art and how the artists use different media to limit their impact on the environment and how they create art to respond to the impact of the environment's issues. I will also be looking at a range of artists and their work to show how they have reacted to the issues of the environment. Artists and how they use materials to stay sustainable.

Ritchard Blacklaw-Jones is a welsh pop artist from Haverfordwest who cleans up the beach and uses the collection of materials that he finds to create his art work, the materials consist of plastic fragments, old packaging, pieces of glass and sometimes children's toys. He also finds it so fun and interesting to go beachcombing for his materials, he likes the element of randomness and that when he is beachcombing he never knows what weather he will be up against, Blacklaw-jones believes by doing this he is more intune and connected with nature. He creates mosaic pop art as you can see in the image down below, they are almost tile like however each artwork is one of a kind. Blacklaw-Jones says in an article that he has been brought up to always recycle and never to waste anything so he has kept the same principle and it now reflects in his art, as well as the beach he also gets his materials from skips. He said that "i found that almost every beach i visited to have lots of plastic rubbish upon it" and that "the variety is endless and its of all colours and textures" the then mentions that he really likes colour and that it inspires his thinking when creating his work he says that "nature shows me her gifts and then its up to me to find a use for them" i love that this implies that he lets the environment guides his art.



By doing this he is stopping the plastic that he collects from the beach from making more micro plastics that harm aquatic life and poison the waters around us. I like that his work is vivid and when other people see his work I think it will give them inspiration to do what he is doing and help to clean up the environment little by little, which little by little is saving aquatic life from dying off as a species.

As one half of the population is harming the world around them there is a other half that is inspired by it in there everyday life, in the book art, religion and the environment, the author Sigurd Bergmann goes on to say that "The human urge to create and the natural world that serves as surroundings" this implies that to thrive as a society we need the natural world as that is where are creativity is formed from and without it we would be living in a world with no history art or sense of

self this would lead to a world without and sort of fun and beauty that we would be able to see from just going outside. Bergmann also believed that we should be exploring "nature's texture" they believed that texture is a form of art in itself and that as a humans they are living in there own texture, this implies that are human life and the nature that we connect with is our are that we live with in every stage of our lives and that we are diving deep and "exploring oneself with the texture of nature and letting nature explore itself". This is said on page twenty one. Bergmann and blacklaw-jones both have the same feeling that nature guides them and then they do the rest of the work when it comes to creating.

This is because without the nature that we rely on so strongly we would have nothing to nurture us and nothing to create and survive with. This directly relates to the impact of the environment and sustainability of art practice because it makes the viewer question their own impact onto the earth within their own carbon footprint. This comes down mainly to the materials he uses. The materials being directly connected to the earth itself. Therefore, it gives the viewer the option to think about how their existence, livelihood and way of life affects their local area, I personally think that this holds great importance in today's political climate because the earth is to be treated as a delicate being in itself. Within Blackjaw-Jones' work he uses extensions of the earth and the by-products of it to convey the feeling of urgency to bring light to how everything in modern life is connected to the natural resources found within our planet.

This leads me to another artist called Chris Jordan who is an artist and photographer whose art consists of photos of animals affected by micro plastics and other things that cause harm to the environment. In Jordans artist statement he describes his work as a " beauty emerging" this is because he loves the beauty of the world around and asks the question "How do we bear the dark realities of contemporary culture". And he feels that we have turned away from the beauty that we have not looked after and in the long run we are destroying. His work shows a very dark and raw look at the environment that we are neglecting. He shows that feeling with close up textured images and also sometimes presenting the photographs in black and white to give a more airy feel. His work attracts people to view his work and think more closely about everyday life and how it will affect our lives in the future if we keep destroying the environment. Jordens work is very straight to the point and scientific he gives you factual information that you can take with you and think about.



I like that his work shows how wasteful we are as a society and that without seeing images like the one above for the collection (intolerable beauty) we never really think about what we are doing to the environment and how wasteful we are as a society. I feel that if we as a society actually open our eyes and see what is happening instead of ignoring than we can do something to stop it, the artist above are reacting to how we treat our world and by creating art they are showing and making the audience aware of what is going on and that there are bigger things going on that we should be paying attention to.

The work can also be directly related to Blackjaw-Jones' work because they both use materials that have either harmed the environment or have come from harvested materials directly from work. This is interesting because from this it can be considered to be a paradox that a lot of artists use to address the issues of sustainability and environment to a wider audience. In this respect they both use material experimentation and carefully selected resources from the earth to ironically display the emotion of loss and grief throughout humanities destruction of the planet they are both trying to open new horizons for environmentally friendly art with how the use there materials and how the visually present their work, however Jorden mainly presents his work in a digital way which is very different to Blackjaw-Jones work who presents his work more in a gallery setting so people can see his work in person just like how we see nature not through a screen but though life's eyes.

On page 6 of the book "Art religion and the environment" the book goes on to mention that artwork could be a human skill of how we want to see the future and to also show what life

one was in the past, so if we take this into account then the art that artists make as a reaction to what is going on with the environment will be looked at later in the future as a reminder of how we miss treated the environment and didn't listen, however we can also look at this as if we are manifesting what we want our world to look like in the future therefore if we use the waste that we just grow away as materials like Ritchard Blacklaw-jones we can create a look of how we want the future environment to be like, clean happy and not miserable if we look after the environment it will grow live on and give back to us. In the words of Sigurd Bergmann "knowing oneself in the environment and how the environment becomes aware of itself within the human" the relates to how if we treat the environment right it will give back to us and how over the years as a society we have grown with the environment and created just as the environment was created and how if we did not see ourselves as one with the environment that all of the artworks that we see today that are influential would never have been created.

However, there is a more messy side to how people react to art and their beliefs when it comes to the environment, similar to how Just Stop Oil, a protest group who are protesting big oil companies who are tearing apart the earth and ruining nature's sights. They protested by throwing a can of soup at Van Gogh's painting "Sunflowers", in the national gallery of london. This caused a massive uproar, this performance was in front of 43 people that were visiting the gallery that afternoon which controversially was even mentioned within national news.

Unlike Chris Jordan who take a more calmer and creative approach by showing the problem that are being caused, just stop oil have decided to be performative but not show and spread awareness about the environment instead they decided to cause a bunch of noise for publicity and then tell the audience the topic that they want them to be knowledgeable of after the fact, in my opinion this is a messy attempt to get the protest group further in the public eye than actually caring about how the environment is decaying.



Just stop oil were trying to make the point that due to the oil being drilled for by large companies it was a cause of the cost of living crisis and this has caused many people to struggle to live and by food, so in response to that they though a can of soup at one of Van Gogh's paintings to make people aware of what was going on behind the scenes and how behind our backs theses companies are causing huge environmental damage, however in my opinion instead of wasting the soup that was used in there performance the could have donated to the people that actually needed it, and they could of protested the billionaire companies that are dominating the ecosystem in a different way instead of being

wasteful which is against their own brand of being sustainable.

In a way this infuriates me even more because it is also wasteful to the world because the donations of soup and resources that could of been used by those in need are significant and a strange juxtaposition comparing it to Jordan's and Blacklaw-Jones' work because I consider their making of art to be viewed by an audience is much more effective at proving a point to the general public than destroying an already established work.

On page 10 of the book by Bergman he goes on to say that he spent "two years of creative work that focused on the woodlands" he then walked in the forest researching it for months to build a connection with nature, he also believes that he now has a "empathic relationship with the forest" which is something that the land artist Andy Goldworthy does, Goldworthy is an artist that creates sculptures with only his natural surroundings that he is in, his materials consist of many things such as leafs, ice, rocks, wood and many more natural materials. His work is as if he has created an artefact out of his natural surroundings. I really like that his art is made from natural materials that degrade over time, i am so interested in how his work goes through the cycle of life and death. His mind creates the artwork with just seeing the material in his surroundings, he can create sculptures with endless possibilities.

He has done many installations around Britain and also when travelling to other countries, that is spectacular about his installations is that they get taken over by the nature that they are in and molded into something new as time passes, i find this incredible because to see his work in person is a once in a lifetime opportunity, his art work is sustainable because he is using what is naturally given to him by the environment. Both Richard Blacklaw-Jones and Andy Goldworthy use the materials that are around them; the only difference is that Goldworthy uses natural materials and Blacklaw-Jones uses man made litter that he finds on the beach. They also both share the same belief that when surrounding themselves is nature they are more connected.



in conclusion i think that there all artist that care about the environment mainly all have Sustainable practices, such as taking harmful waste that would become microplastics and using it to create art works, also travelling and photographing to show views that we are creating so much waste and then other artists create their work with natural materials that the nature around will reclame as time goes by. And that sustainability in art practices comes in many different forms. And that without love for the environment are creativity as a society would not have flourished, nearly every artist through the years has used the environment around them as a reference to there work and before the human race knew about science and how to put chemicals together to make paint we used the nature materials around us to create art and we still do in present day. Each artist brings their own unique way of talking about the environment and how to admire it. Nature inspires art, then follows literature, history, and the way that we choses to live our lives but it all started by what we are influenced by and that is the environment. What I have taken out of researching is that sometimes you need to let nature guide you though your creative process.

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