



Is Art Criticism More Powerful Than Artwork? - Analyzing An Argument

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Abstract:

Art Criticism is necessary for an artist's life to seek ways to better their skills and how well they can connect with the public. Their artwork is analyzed, judged, and discussed in art criticism that necessitates the artist to consider a specific piece of art and offer their own version of it. For example, Picasso's art was criticized negatively in the initial days. Later Art critics praised Picasso's Cubism Artworks and he got fame. Jackson Pollock's Action works were approved by the Critic Clement Greenberg that was thought to have been responsible for the career of Jackson Pollock. Criticism is a crucial element in any artist's career to help recognize the Artwork and make income. The price of art is determined by the Artist's market value. Art critics do not decide the prices of art, but their comments influence determining the cost of art and bring a good Artist's market. Getting a good market is not that simple. It sometimes takes a while for society to catch up to a new artist. A significant review by a major critic can cause a ripple in the art world, resulting in purchase decisions by noted collectors and thereafter a review of pricing by representing galleries. Art galleries participate in the advancement of the careers of the artists they represent. They attempt to connect them with major collectors, obtain those good critical reviews, and get their work into museums, and when the volume of sales warrants it, increase the prices. It is an important facet of an artist's career development. Self-criticism expresses the passion and commitment to improving the art and searching for points of view beyond the limit. Marcel Duchamp self-criticized his ready-made Artworks that art has no definition and is paradoxical and schizophrenic. The self-criticism of Mark Rothko, Damien Hirst and Maurizio Cattelan made them popular and their Artworks sold for good prices. Considering all these together, it seems to be Art Criticism has more power than Artwork.

Keywords: Art Criticism, Critics, Artists, Art Work, Self-criticism

Introduction:

When you hear the term "Art Criticism," you might initially picture somebody scowling while pointing out the virtues and shortcomings of Artwork in an art gallery. But Art Criticism is more than merely making observations or highlighting an Artwork's virtues and shortcomings. An artwork is analyzed, judged, and discussed in art criticism.¹ It calls for the artist to consider a specific piece of art and offer a believable own version of it.

Why Criticism is an Essential Part of an Art

Art Criticism is merely someone's way of feeling better about someone else's creativity. It is a lot more challenging to perform an act of creation, but it is easy to attack and destroy it with criticism and at the same time criticism makes some simple art great. If one or two words are changed, the understanding will differ in criticism.¹ For example, if a Critic says, "Your work is too minimal", you may not feel easy. However, if the same states "Your work follows Minimalism", you look at your work differently. Artists generally need positive opinions from critics to get their artwork seen and sold. Therefore, positive criticism is a crucial element in any artist's career to help recognize the artwork and make income. Artists are aware that they should not take criticism personally and should not let the criticism prevent them from producing the work they desire. Artists must understand that it is not their responsibility to win everyone over with their work and know that there will always be those who disagree with everyone, regardless of one's abilities or intentions.²

Another facet of criticism is taking into account and considering other people's viewpoints. Receiving criticism aids in maintaining professionalism and gaining respect from others. It is also necessary for pursuing an artistic profession. Criticism is crucial for artists because it is, quite simply, one of the best ways to improve the artwork. Artists should actively seek out ways to advance both their technical proficiency and their interpersonal communication and relationship-building skills. Criticism is necessary for effective communication and professional growth. Create an artwork and share it with people who find themselves in the artwork through critique. Analyzing one's own and other artists' work is crucial for artists. Professional responses to both favourable and unfavourable criticism should be made by the artist to advance their artistic endeavours.

Art Criticism originates the Art Movement

Louis Leroy, an Art Critic, coined the term Impressionism in Paris in 1874 after getting impressed with the painting Artwork "Impression, sunrise" by Claude Monet.³



Impression, Sunrise

One of the first avant-garde modernist movements, Fauvism, which included artists such as Henry Matisse and Andre Derain, got its name from a word created by art critic Louis Vauxcelles, who referred to these artists as les Fauves, which approximately translates to "the wild beasts."

Harold Rosenberg (1906–1978), an American art critic, first used the phrase "Action Painting" in 1952 after becoming intrigued by various painting techniques that incorporated splattering, dripping, and expressive brushstrokes.⁴



Jackson Pollock, in Action (1950)

Critics named even some art movements themselves disparagingly, with the name later adopted as a badge of honour by the artists of the style with the original negative meaning forgotten.

How Criticism makes some Artists a Champ

For anyone, accepting criticism is difficult but Artists have to face Criticism. Art without any criticism is useless, criticism either positive or negative always helps artists, For example, Picasso's art was criticized negatively in the initial days, know that even Picasso was not immune to the haters and trolls of his time.⁵ But the negative criticism also made Picasso popular. Later the Art critics Jean Cassou and José Bergamín praised Picasso's Cubism Artworks. The gradual positive criticism made him famous.

Decades ago, the initial interest of the Critic Peggy Guggenheim was critical with Jackson Pollock's Action works and the approval of the Critic Clement Greenberg was thought to have been almost single-handedly responsible for the career of Jackson Pollock.⁴ So the opinion of critics is not without effect and now artworks of Picasso and Pollock are sold out for millions of dollars.

If the criticism feels like an attack/insult, the artist thanks the critique and moves on. Artists take criticism from people who know about the art truly. They listen to criticism and the perspectives of critiques that give ideas they would have never thought of, they ask questions with critics but don't debate but accept mistakes if any, and receive constructive criticism which they can use for their advantage and this is the way artist do deconstruct the feedback. They thank the critiques for their time and ideas, consider both positive and negative comments equally and take only necessary and decide what they would do. Artists do critique appreciation for art appreciation.

Do art critics decide the prices of certain art pieces?

Art critics don't decide prices but they can certainly influence them. Beginner painters don't just make a name for themselves with their amazing work but become more popular with good positive criticism. The price of art is determined by the Artist's market. The Artworks of the leading artists can be attracted fans and sold quickly. Getting a good market is not that simple. What you must remember about any famous artist is that they were not always famous. And their early assessments were not always kind enough. It sometimes takes a while for society to catch up to a new artist. That was certainly the case with Pablo Picasso and Jackson Pollock. Art galleries participate in the advancement of the careers of the artists they represent. They attempt to connect them with major collectors, obtain those good critical reviews, get their work into museums, and when the volume of sales warrants it, increase prices. Of course, this has to be done carefully, in cooperation with the artist and concert with other representing galleries, but it is an important facet of an artist's career development. A significant review by a major critic can cause a ripple in the art world, resulting in purchase decisions by noted collectors and thereafter a review of pricing by representing galleries.

Self-Criticism

Self-criticism expresses the passion and commitment to improving the art and searching for points of view beyond the limit. Learning how to self-critique can be a useful skill for artists to have. Many people often don't have an ongoing source of critical feedback in their artwork that they can access any time they need it. Artists do Self-criticism based on Judging, continuous analysis, and conclusion of their artwork with self-trust and confidence about the underlying themes and contexts, and structural meanings of art. They are clear with why you create what they create, how their work fit in today's world, the thought behind the work, themes of work, and ready to talk about their work efficiently and as naturally as possible

Self-Criticism by Marcel Duchamp (1887 - 1968)

He created many ready-made pieces that were Artworks but were actually just ordinary, unaltered objects. Fountain (1917) and Bicycle Wheel are the most well-known examples.

A porcelain urinal bearing the signature "R. Mutt" is the centrepiece of Marcel Duchamp's readymade artwork known as The Fountain (Toilet) from 1917.⁶



Bicycle wheel as an anti-art



Fountain, by Marcel Duchamp

The word "anti-art," which rejects traditional notions of art, was coined in April 1917. It is linked to the Dada movement and is usually acknowledged to have originated with Marcel Duchamp before World War I, around 1914.⁷

His readymade artworks sent shock waves across the art world that can still be felt today. He self-criticized that art has no definition and is paradoxical and schizophrenic. He had been forced to contradict himself to avoid conforming to his taste. Neo-dadaism has taken his Readymade arts and found aesthetic beauty in them. He criticized other artists that they repeating themselves and this idea of repeating is a form of masturbation.⁸

Why are paintings by Mark Rothko regarded as Artworks?

Imagine the amount of severe negative criticism directed at the Artworks of the most well-known American artist Mark Rothko. The people express their dissatisfaction with it, using phrases like "A Daub," "a work of a house painter, not an Artist," and "The emperor has no clothes."⁹



No. 6 (Violet, Green, and Red) sold for \$203 million

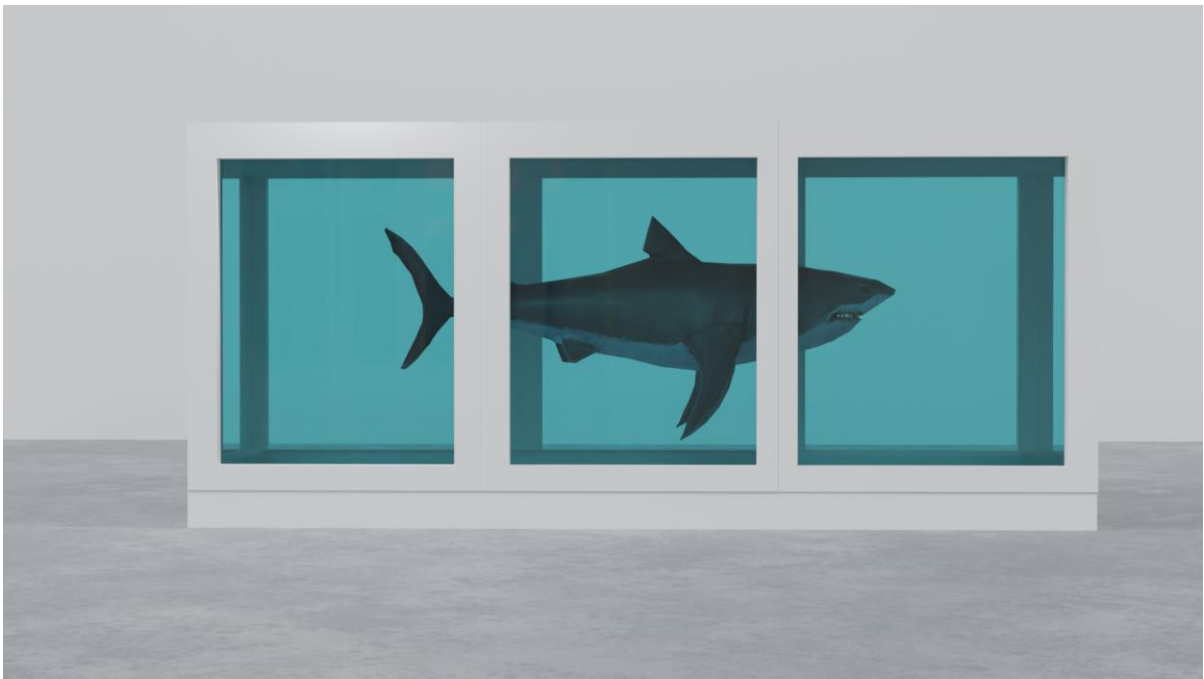
Mark Rothko criticized "My art is not abstract; it lives and breathes, I have no interest in anything having to do with the interaction of colour and shape. I only want to communicate the most fundamental human feelings, such as sorrow, ecstasy, and despair. And the fact that many people sob and cry when they see my photographs demonstrate that I can convey these fundamental human feelings".⁹

The most valuable quality a talent can have in today's society, much like in other branches of the arts, is recognizability and the artist's signature style. How many of the many millions of people with great voices in the world can we clearly distinguish when we hear them on the radio? The situation with painting is comparable.

If you've seen a group of Rothko's paintings at least once, you're guaranteed to have a lasting memory of them. And they are not likely to be confused with the writings of other authors.

Real Cadaver Artworks by Damien Hirst

Damien Hirst contends that objects should be killed before being viewed (in formaldehyde-filled vitrines). The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living (Dead Shark in Formalin Cage) is one of his most well-known pieces of Artwork.



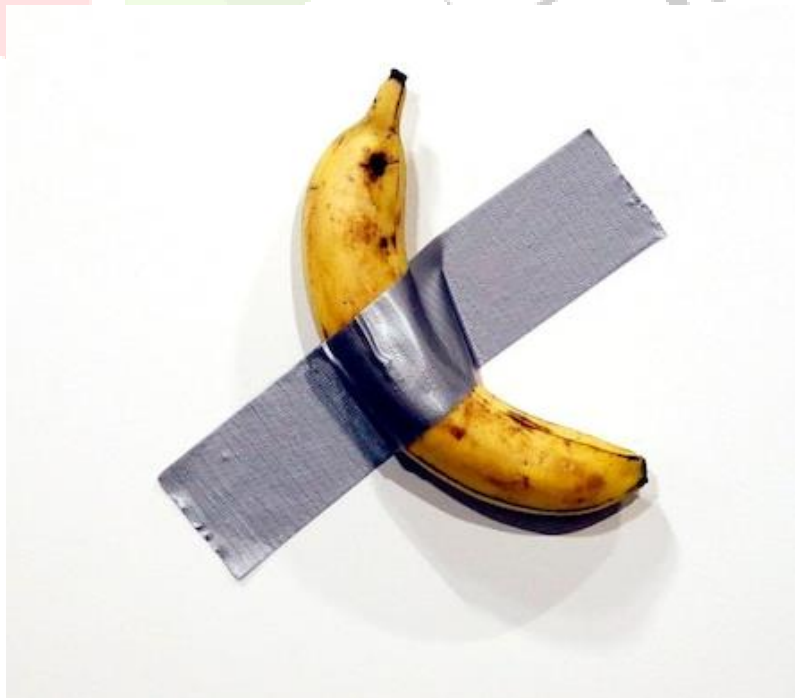
The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living

Damien Hirst faced both positive and negative criticism, he says the criticism is 'to be expected', and he ignored negative reactions all through his career. He adhered to the notion that "creating good work is a constant battle. If you succeed, it may bring you joy. There isn't a better sensation. It is lovely. However, it's always about perseverance, creativity, sweat, and smart ideas".¹⁰

He explained that the difference between art that depicts death and actual death is that the former is a joyful fact, while the latter is a sombre one.¹¹

Artwork titled Comedian

Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan created a minimalist Artwork named Comedian which was displayed at Art Basel in Miami Beach, Florida, consisting of a fresh banana taped to a wall, And that Banana was sold for \$120,000 in front of a sizable press presence.¹²



Artwork named Comedian

People get confused when they say things like this are art, and this is where art criticism comes into play. The Comedian Artwork is self-criticized as a "symbol of global trade, a double entendre, as well as a classic device for humour". It was dubbed "humorous minimalist artwork" by Newsweek. The Comedian banana piece of art was linked to Andy Warhol's Pop Art Fruit from 1967. It has been told that Maurizio Cattelan recreated Andy Warhol's Pop Art Fruit as Installation Art.¹³

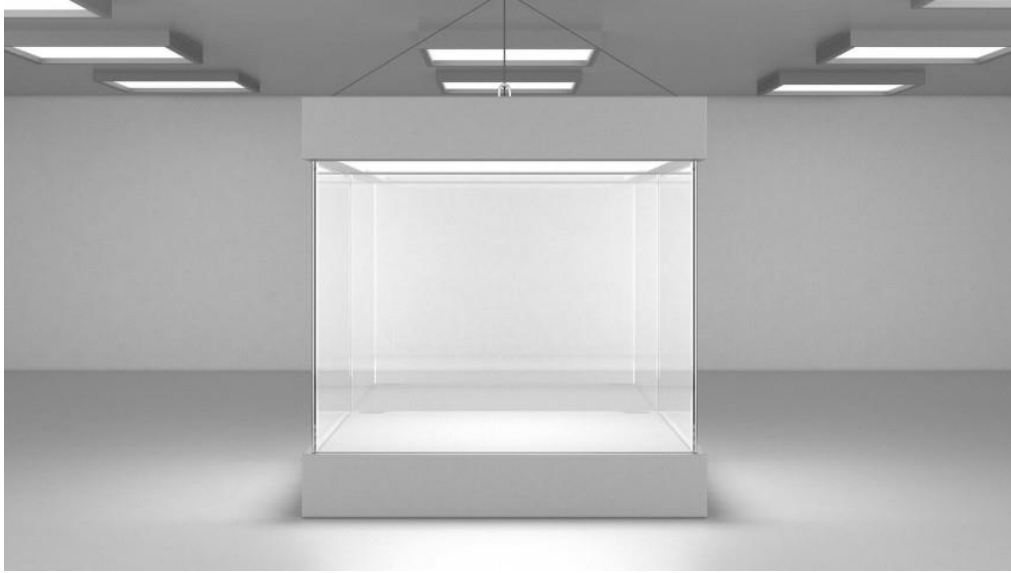


According to CBS News, "It may be the most talked-about artwork at this year's event." A French collector and visual artist David Dutana became interested in the concept and spent a staggering \$120,000 to acquire it and consumed it immediately. And one more banana was taped to the same wall the next day and later was taken out of the Exhibition because the line-ups to view it created so many disturbances that the curators were concerned that other works of art would get harmed.¹⁴ The gallery issued the following statement following the removal: "Comedian eventually provided a nuanced reflection of us with its simple composition. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all who took part in this unforgettable journey, as well as to our coworkers. We deeply apologise to all fairgoers who won't be able to see Comedian today".¹⁵

\$18,300 for Nothing but a Glass Box

A 2021 Artwork in the name of "Immaterial invisible sculpture" with the title "Lo Sono" (which means "I am"), created by 67-year-old Italian modern Artist Salvatore Garau, is a 5x5-foot empty Glass box.

The artist explained in his self-criticism, "When I choose to display an immaterial sculpture in a specific location, that location will concentrate a specific quantity and density of thoughts at a specific place, generating a sculpture that will only assume the most various shapes. The vacuum is nothing more than an energetically dense region, and even if we empty it completely and nothing is left, the Heisenberg uncertainty principle states that nothing has mass and energy condensed and turned into particles, that is, into humans".¹⁶ According to Garau, the sculpture exists in a vacuum rather than as a separate entity. Garau stated that "the Hoover is nothing more than a space full of energy." The Heisenberg uncertainty principle states that "nothing" has weight even if we empty it and find nothing is left. As a result, it has the energy that has been compressed and changed into particles, i.e. into us. Garau sold that Glass box for \$18,300 at auction.¹⁷



Immaterial Sculpture 'Lo Sono'

Buddha in Contemplation

Artist Salvatore Garau also installed another immaterial intangible sculpture, titled Buddha in Contemplation, at Milan's Piazza Della Scala, in front of the Gallerie d'Italia entrance. The sculpture consists of a square-shaped (5x5-foot) area marked with tape with nothing into it.



Immaterial Sculpture 'Buddha in Contemplation'

Garau self-criticized, "It is a work that asks you to activate the power of imagination, which anyone has, even those who don't think they have it, just as music, songs, or prayers can help us see what we don't see, a title sensation might cause us to view and recognize an existence. You cannot see it, yet it is there right now and will stay there forever."

Garau, on the other hand, is adamant that the item exists. He claims "It is made of air and spirit. It also comes with stringent standards for how it should be displayed. This contains a secluded area with no obstacles that necessitate lighting or climate control."

Garau sold that Immaterial Sculpture Artwork that does not exist in any tangible form for \$18,000 and the buyer has taken nothing but an authentication certificate.¹⁸

Discussion

Art Criticism, whether good or negative, is always beneficial to artists; for example, Picasso's paintings were initially criticized severely. However, the unfavourable critique helped Picasso gain popularity. Later, art critics Jean Cassou and José Bergamín admired Picasso's Cubism works.⁵ Jackson Pollock's Action works were approved by critic Clement Greenberg, who was regarded to have been almost solely responsible for Jackson Pollock's career.⁴ The price of art is decided by the artist's market value. Getting a good market is not that simple. It can take some time for society to catch up with a new artist. A significant review by a famous critic can generate a ripple in the art world, resulting in purchases by Art collectors and a subsequent reassessment of pricing by representative galleries. Art galleries contribute to the professional development of the artists they represent. They try to connect them with prominent collectors, acquire favourable critical reviews, get their work into museums, and raise prices when the amount of sales merits it. It is a crucial aspect of an artist's professional development.

Self-criticism expresses the passion and commitment to improving the art and searching for points of view beyond the limit. "My art is not abstract; it lives and breathes; I have no interest in anything having to do with the interaction of colour and shape," self-criticized Mark Rothko. I merely want to express the most basic human emotions, such as grief, ecstasy, and despair.⁹ And the fact that many people cry and sob when they view my images shows that I can transmit these basic human emotions." Cadaver Artworks creator Damien Hirst believes that objects should be murdered before being viewed (in formaldehyde-filled vitrines). He emphasized that the distinction between art depicting death and actual death is that the former is a happy fact, whilst the latter is a sad one.¹⁰ Andy Warhol's Pop Art Fruit from 1967 was linked to the Comedian banana piece of art by Maurizio Cattelan and is said to have replicated Andy Warhol's Pop Art Fruit as Installation Art.¹ In his self-criticism of Immaterial Invisible Artworks, artist Salvatore Garau stated, "The sculpture exists in a vacuum rather than as a separate entity." "The Hoover is nothing more than an energy-filled space." According to the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, "nothing" retains weight even if we empty it and find nothing remains. As a result, it contains energy that has been compressed and transformed into particles, i.e. us.¹⁷ Criticism in any form positive, negative and self, is an important part of any artist's career because it helps the artwork be recognized and earn money. Art criticism does not decide the prices of art, but the comments influence deciding the price of art and bring a good Artist's market.

Conclusion

Art Criticism is very important and essential for an artist. Skill is important to create art but argumentation and systematic reasoning are more important to reach an audience, here art criticism is getting its importance. Art critics do not decide the prices of art, but their comments influence increasing the Artist's market value and deciding the price of the art. Art gallery participation and good critical reviews are important facets of an artist's career development. An artist's self-criticism in an intelligent way is essential to face negativity and to emphasize the career. Putting all of this together, it seems to be art criticism has more power than Artwork.

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