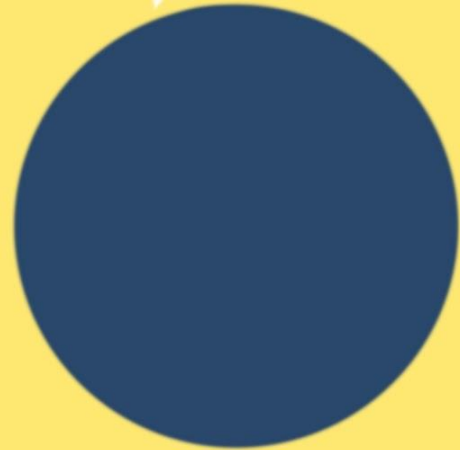


The Installation Art Issue
September, 2023

KNOW
THEY
ART?
?





THE INSTALLATION ART ISSUE

Art on canvas, paper, screens and walls is definitely brilliant. But sometimes... we like experiencing artwork with more than just the sense of sight.

Installation art lets us walk through, peep into, climb over and even run around the piece in a complementary environment for a sensory experience.

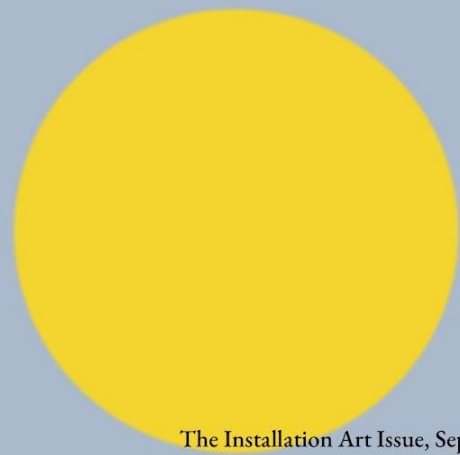
Let us explore The Installation Art Issue.

Breaking Waves Installation by Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, photo Moka Studio
The Weather Project by Olafur Eliasson, 2003, via Studio Olafur Eliasson, Berlin



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THE HISTORY OF INSTALLATION ART

What is Installation Art?

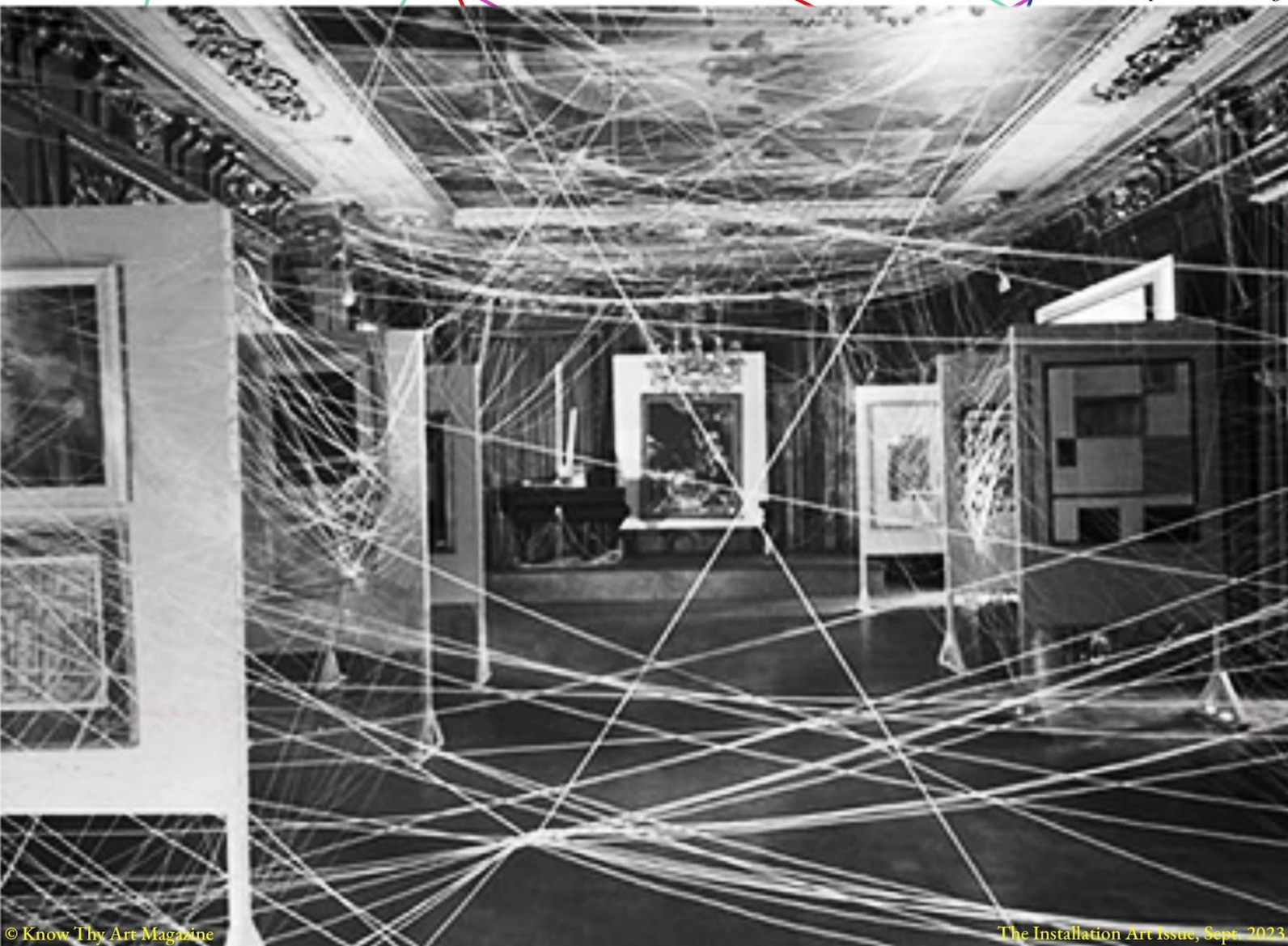
Installation art involves building 3-dimensional pieces. These artworks can be placed in studios, exhibitions, museums and even in public locations. Sometimes, the artwork will have specific elements that explore subjects depending on the theme, meaning or the site itself.

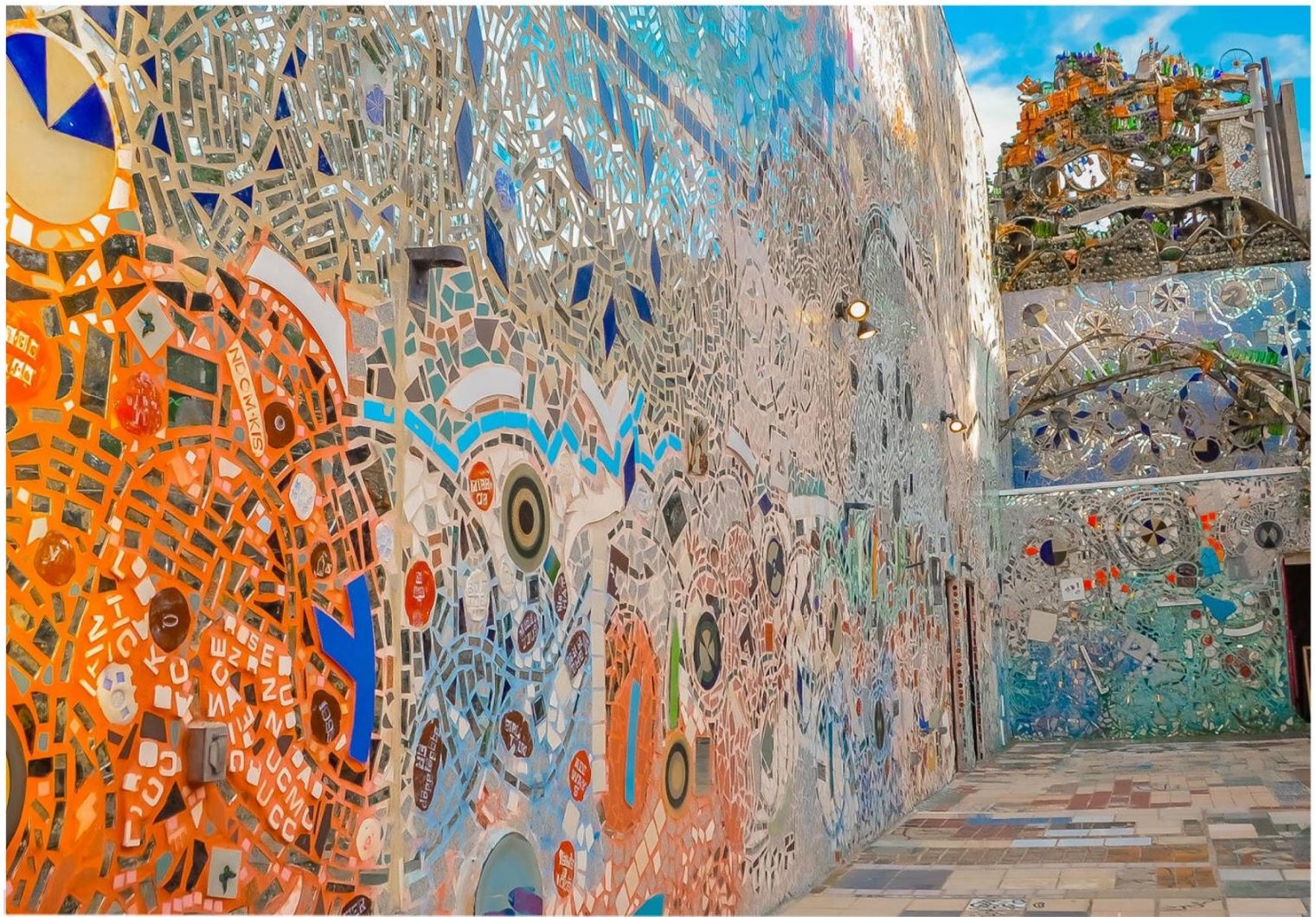
According to *Installation Art and the Elaboration of Psychological Concepts. A Definition of the Term 'Excursive'* by Lilyana Georgieva Karadjova:

Installation art is an art form that requires the participation of viewers and draws their attention to the process of perception. It is designed to create experience, to immerse the spectator and is inherently related to psychological theories.

For example, an installation artwork commissioned outside the PlayStation Headquarters could be a sculpture made entirely out of old video game controllers. In this way, the installation being so close to the PlayStation HQ is like a commentary on the installation.

Duchamp - Mile of String





(Top) Isaiah Zagar - Philadelphia's Magic Gardens. (Bottom) Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset - Prada Marfa

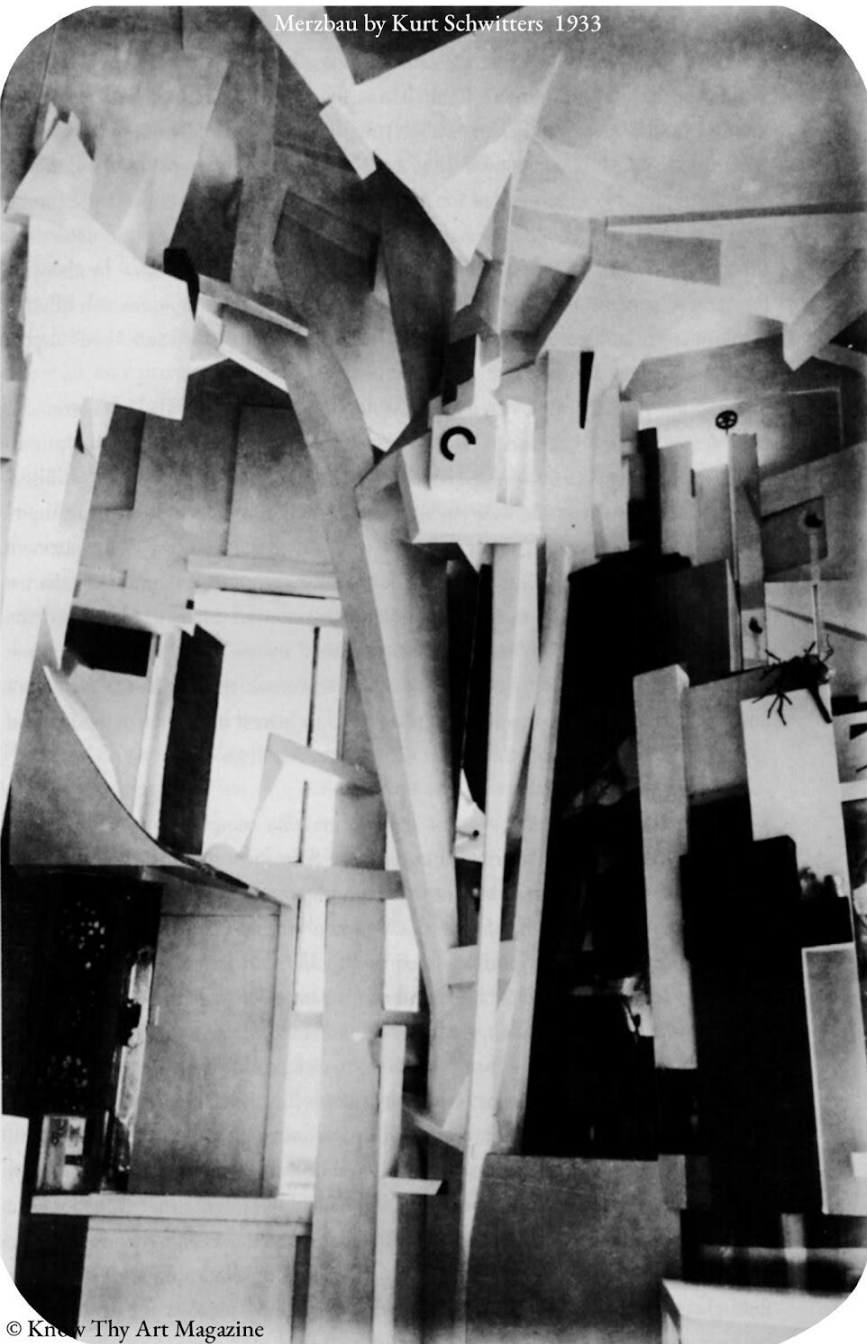


Installation Art V Sculptures

- Installation Art is mixed media and can employ the use of sculptures along with other objects.
- Sculptures are just sculptures. They are mostly made entirely out of a single material like plaster of Paris, metal, ceramic etc.
- Installation art creates an environment. You can walk through the installation because elements are placed all around you to create an immersive experience. You can walk around the installation or even see it from far away and it will be an intrinsic part of the environment.
- A sculpture like the statue of David by Michelangelo, on the other hand, can be placed in any museum or large room it will have the same value because it doesn't require a setting, so to speak.



Merzbau by Kurt Schwitters 1933



Sometimes, there can be a fine line between what distinguishes Installation Art from a sculpture. Sort of like the fine line between whether a pizza is better with fruit or without. Yes, it can be better with pineapple (to some at least) but pizza is definitely worse with grapes on it. Either way, the Installation Art V Sculpture debate is not likely to be a hot topic at the next United Nations meeting anytime soon.

But where did the idea for these real-world pieces come from and who made the first out of canvas artwork?

We can't be entirely sure but it is probably Kurt Schwitters - Merzbau in 1933 that can be considered the first official installation art. But this would depend on what qualifies as installation art. I mean... today a tour of Liberace's house in Vegas can be like an installation art experience but to him, it was just his home that showcased his flashy style.

Either way, it was mostly the 1930s that saw many popular installations that went beyond just being sculptures. Artists like Schwitters and Salvador Dali had creations that dabbled in the third dimension.

YAY



KUSAMA

— INFINITY ROOM

INSTALLATION ART TODAY

In this “Instagrammable” world, walking through an Installation environment means a photo op here and a photo op there. While documenting every little thing on social media has become the bane of our existence, in this case, it might be a boon. Installation Artists are going internationally viral even though their creation is probably limited to a small studio in Manhattan.

Today, making installation art to draw attention to the problems of the world are quite common. The problems of the planet in particular are getting bolder and even more ingenious. Many installations call out the government for its lack of action to curb plastic pollution. Other issues like the Opioid crisis and big oil are favourite subjects for artists.

Since the topic of sustainability is provocative, artists are even taking it a step further to ensure that even the materials they use to build the installation are planet-friendly.

The G20 meeting is where the top 20 economies of the world meet to discuss the future of the planet in terms of trade and development. When India hosted it this year in 2023, they built one installation for each member country. These installation artworks were modelled after animals that represented each country. All these artworks were made entirely of waste materials. This eco-system of animals from different countries made out of waste material was meant as a reminder for a pledge to put the planet first.

Installation artists all around the world are getting clever with the kind of message they want to convey through their artwork. Being artistic is good but being ingenious is even better. It is likely that clever artworks that express social commentary won't end anytime soon.

Rubber Duck by Florentijn Hofman





G20 Recycled Material Country Animal Representations by Lalit Lala Akademi, photo by Sanchit Khanna





THE FUTURE OF INSTALLATION ART

What happens when the license for the installation expires and the artist is meant to wrap up the artwork? Should they just leave with their briefcase and be remembered in a column with a few quotes from art critics? Absolutely not!

The more value there is in an artwork, the more likely the artwork will stay for longer. If the viewer finds the artwork valuable, the piece might become a part of everyday life. A garden installation that incorporates child-safety standards can easily stay and double as monkey bars. A green installation or a vertical garden on a building can stay and filter the air for as long as possible.

These days artists collaborate with architects to make work that doubles to clean the air, harvest rainwater, absorb solar energy and so much more. This is when art meets purpose to a greater degree. While this may sound like a new concept, if we pause to think about the Sydney Opera House, it doesn't seem so new. This lotus-shaped building and others like the Dubai-frame are like a mix of architecture and installation art.

Installation artists will keep coming up with clever ways to incorporate art into daily life. Working with architects, biologists and material designers will only help us advance further into the future of installation art.





SENSEI SPEAKS

“

I just simply filled the whole gallery up ...

When you opened the door you found yourself in the midst of an entire environment ...

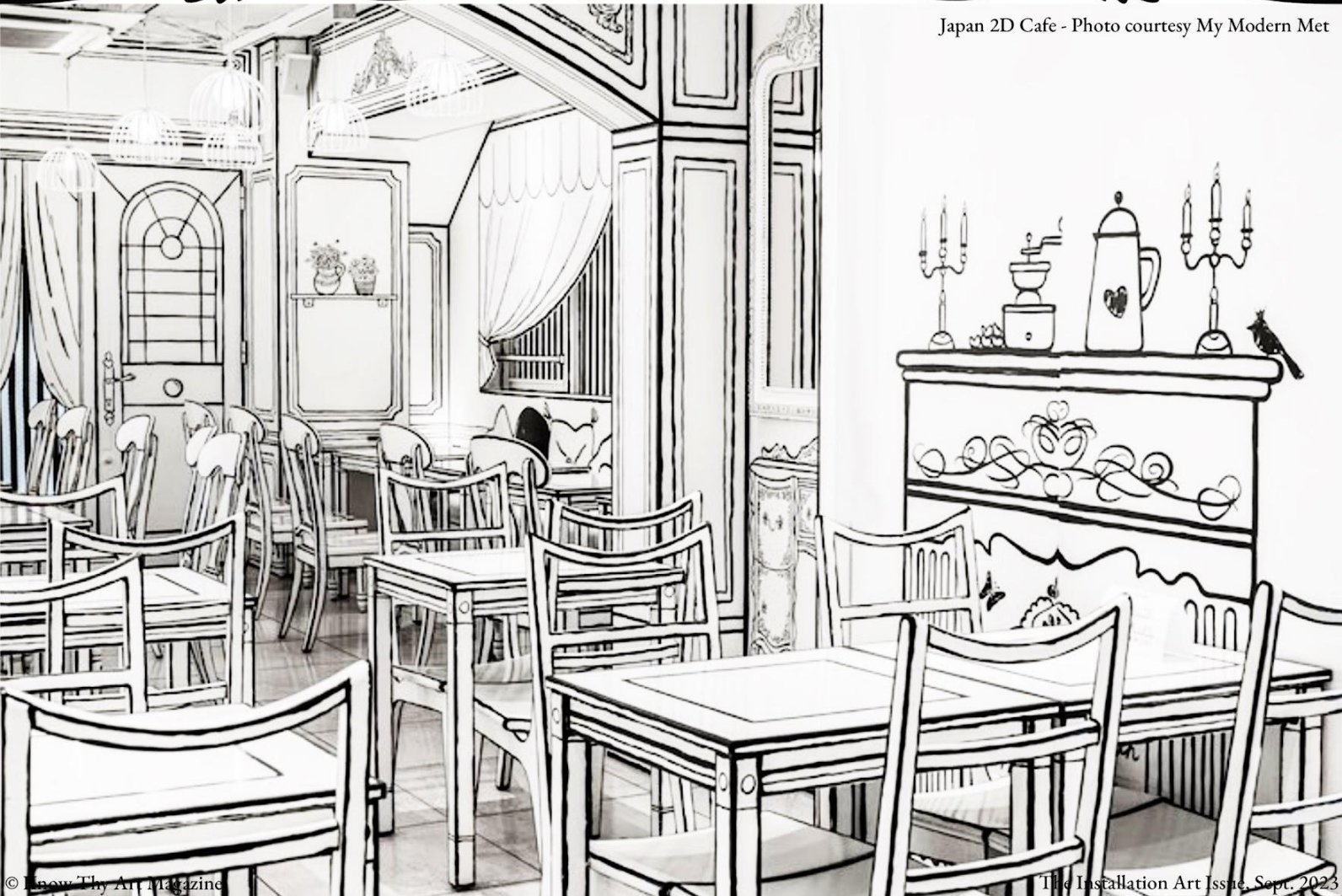
The materials were varied: sheets of plastic, crumpled up cellophane, tangles of Scotch tape, sections of slashed and daubed enamel and pieces of coloured cloth ... five tape machines spread around the space played electronic sounds which I had composed.

”

- Allan Kaprow



Japan 2D Cafe - Photo courtesy My Modern Met



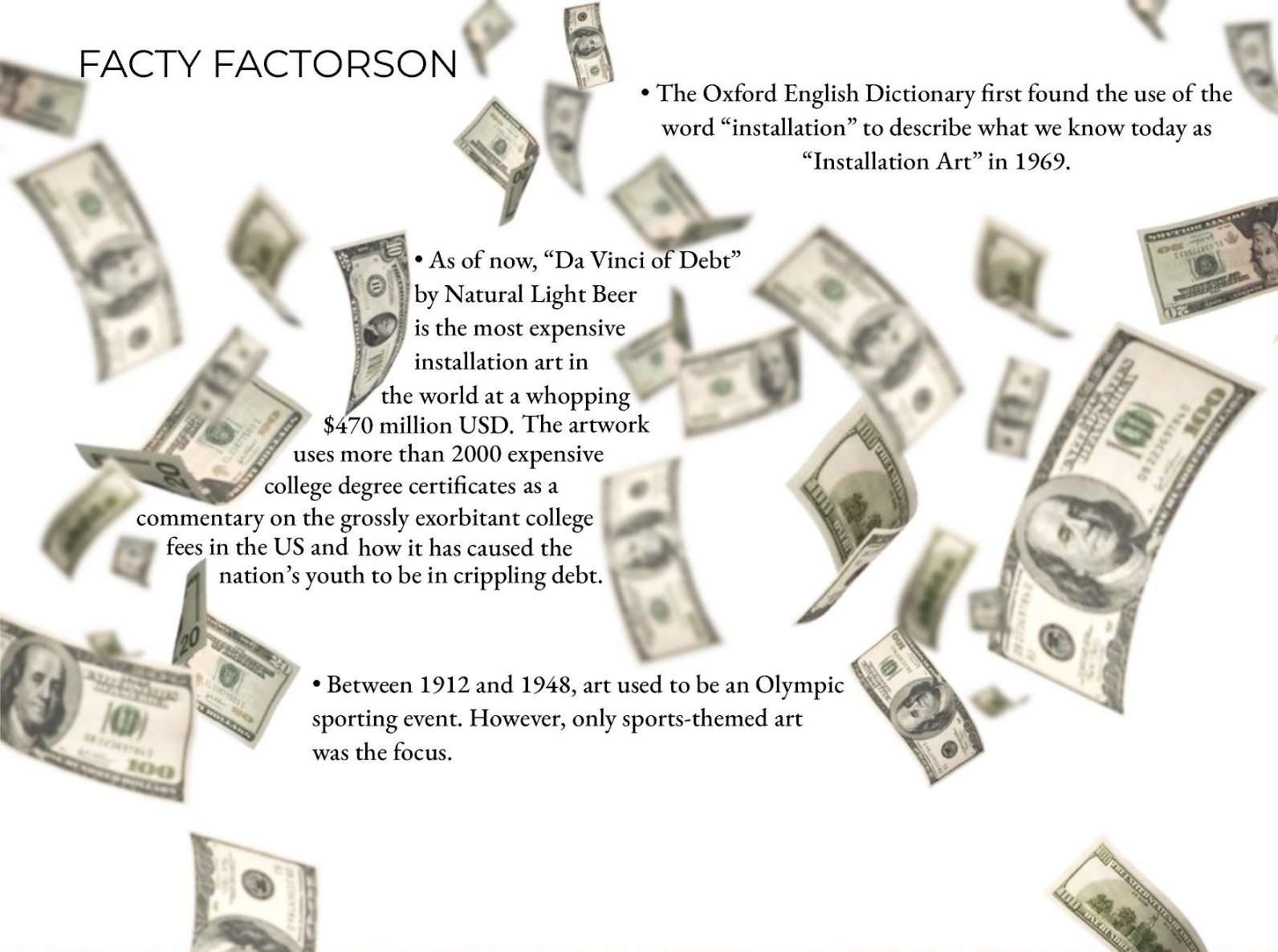


FACTY FACTORSON

- The Oxford English Dictionary first found the use of the word “installation” to describe what we know today as “Installation Art” in 1969.

- As of now, “Da Vinci of Debt” by Natural Light Beer is the most expensive installation art in the world at a whopping \$470 million USD. The artwork uses more than 2000 expensive college degree certificates as a commentary on the grossly exorbitant college fees in the US and how it has caused the nation’s youth to be in crippling debt.

- Between 1912 and 1948, art used to be an Olympic sporting event. However, only sports-themed art was the focus.



Natural Light Beer - Da Vinci of Debt



ASK THE EDITOR

What is the process for making installation art?

- Nick, Connecticut

When it comes to installation art, designers have to first have an awareness of the space that they will work with. This would have to be done with a standard site inspection. With a studio it would be easy as there are flat walls with sturdy, even flooring. But for an outdoor installation, the temperature, wind conditions, road, soil, footfall, car traffic and many other factors have to be considered.

After this, the designer must decide the message they wish to communicate. Once they decide on the message, they must pick which material and elements they will use. For example, wood, wire etc.



To actually design the installation, just like most forms of art and design, it is the good ol' fashioned sketchbook. After brainstorming the design, the designer can build a miniature. This will help the designer know if the design will be viable as a life-size model. Any chinks in the structural stability can be easily spotted and fixed in this stage. Final touches can even be added to this miniature like paints and embellishments.

Photographs of this miniature might go through a 3D design app like AutoCad or Figma. Designers can virtually create the design and calculate the amount of material they will need, the cost, labour requirement and perhaps even maintenance costs. Once this is done, renting the space and permits to set up the installation should be complete. Usually, the client or the one who commissions the artwork will be in charge of the officious details. If all of this is in order, it is only a matter of building the installation artwork.

Obviously, installation art built in the 60s and such, would not have the digital assistance that designers have today. However, making blueprints of their artwork would still be needed in just as much detail.

This, in a nutshell, is the process of making installation art.

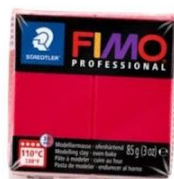


KNOW THY ART - ADD TO CART

Need something more creatively stimulating than a fidget spinner to pass your time?

Staedtler Fimo is basically like Play-Doh for grown-ups. You could reuse Fimo or harden it in an oven to keep your creations permanent. Make anything you like, from a T-rex to jewellery or a Rose and even display it on your desk. Working with Fimo helps clear the mind and it is a clutter-free pass time. Follow the link below to purchase it from the official Staedtler website.

<https://www.staedtler.com/uk/en/products/fimo-modelling-clay-accessories/>



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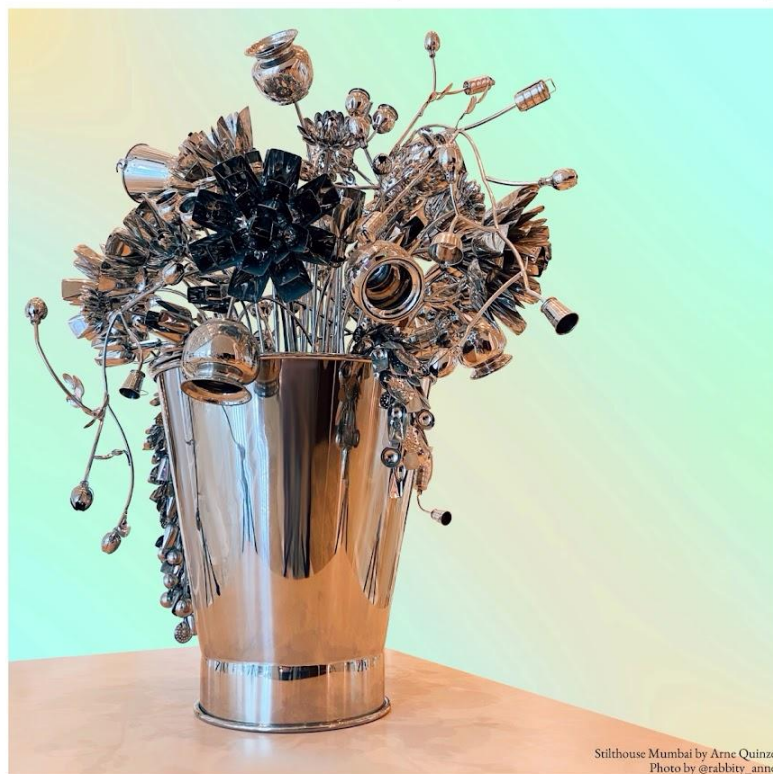
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FREEBIE

2 free digital art prints
featuring abstract installations
by Arne Quinze and Subodh Gupta
(10" x 10" max stretchable size)



Stilthouse Mumbai by Arne Quinze
Photo by @rabbity_anne

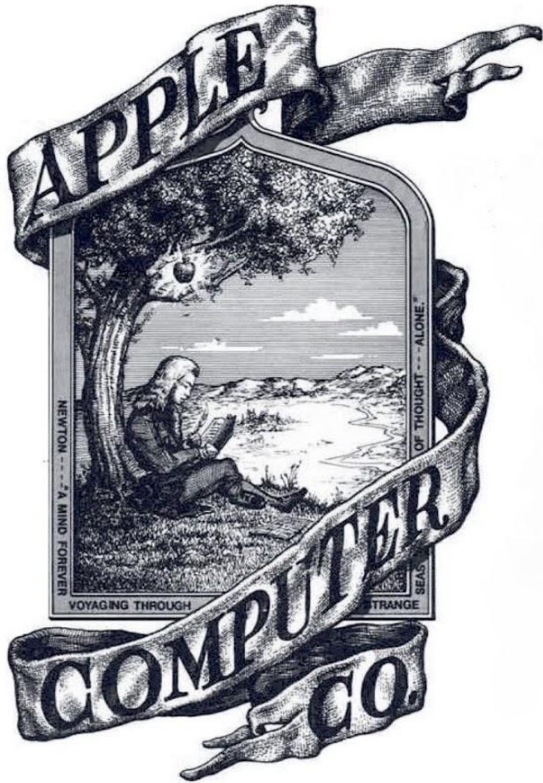


Stilthouse Mumbai by Arne Quinze
Photo by @rabbity_anne

SNEAK PEEK OF THE NEXT ISSUE

If autumn is about shedding the old to make way for the new, then redesigns are about the same.
Stay tuned for October's issue of Know Thy Art magazine.

The Redesign Issue



Apple Inc. Logos
1976 - Present



