

I want you to quote one passage from each essay and then comment on the quote. So, a total of two quotes and two one paragraph responses. When reading Hutchinson and Warhol, think of the Grayson Perry Video. Warhol is discussing Beauty in the era of free expression but also intensive commodification where status and goods, stores and our buying habits define us. Remember that before Warhol made his famous Campbell Soup cans and Brillo boxes, he drew advertisements for newspapers and magazines. If you have never encountered Andy Warhol before, please Google him as part of the assignment.

I'm betting that you will find the Hutchinson essay harder to read. You are all familiar with our over commodified world. After all, you live in a culture of fast food and status buying, but you are probably unfamiliar with the debates within art in the 20th century to which Hutchinson refers. What is this modernism he is talking about? Who is Clement Greenberg?

Well, Modernism is both an art historical period, roughly from 1890s into the 1950s, and a way of thinking about art. Modernism focused on painting and was obsessed with the "picture plane" - the fact that drawings or paintings exist on a flat surface. Rather than hide this fact through the illusion of depth, which art had been doing since the Italian Renaissance through cross hatching, value shifts and perspective, modernist painting thought to highlight the shallow nature of the paper or canvas. It was not about creating an illusion of depth, but revealing the shallow depth of the canvas. Greenberg was the greatest theorist of late modernism and is associated with artists like Jackson Pollock and Wilhelm DeKooning. (Unfamiliar names? Look them up!)

After World War II, we artists and art historians entered a new era of making called Postmodernism. This is the era of Warhol and collage and combining a multitude of historical styles that continues to this day. It is art after the atomic bomb and the computer. It is art that does not believe in a single truth, but multiple experiences and momentary revelation. Hutchinson talks about the ugly as a breaking through of raw stuff through a surface, of leakage. Ugliness is a way out of that picture plane. How could a piece of pottery reflect this thought? Your response to this essay could be a drawing as well as words.

Example of a quote and a response:

I chose this quote from the Hutchinson essay, "What the cultural anorexic cannot contemplate and cannot bear is the contingency of the real: the knowledge that there is something through the surface, which cannot be contained." p. 154

Response: This quote first made me think of the idea of the sub-conscious that which is repressed in our lives, but which bubbles forth in dreams and in art. The "cultural anorexic" that he refers to...what is he saying?... I think that he means that we live like anorexics, denying the body, the raw flesh of ourselves. The "real" is the realization that we cannot achieve culturally produced ideals; instead we are messy and individual, imperfect and mortal. If I were to make a pot that reflected these ideas, I would cut into the pot and then use slip trailing to make "the real ooze out." I could also have individual words or images tumble out from the cuts in my pot.