

## **Annotated Bibliography: Material Culture and Globalization – Is it Art.....or Artifact?**

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### **Abstract:**

*There are many ways to view an object depending upon one's perspective, field of study or culture. There is also a fine line between an object that is meant for utilitarian purpose but then recognized as a work of art or vice-versa (Barnhart, 2002). The relationship between material culture and visual arts lies in the object and its materials as meaningful connection to ones' society and culture. Material culture informs visual arts, gives ideas, narrative and social context. Museum curators and visitors fail to realize that a number of objects in the history museum are of aesthetic value and a number in art museums are of historical significance (Barnhart, 2002). The following artists and sites reflect the idea that the way we look at something depends upon the culture we come from and in this era of globalization cultures still have their own frame of reference to rely upon.*

Barnhart, T. (2002). Material culture and art. *Extraordinary things: A study of contemporary art through material culture*. Retrieved from <http://kaz.art2xs.com/mccatalog.pdf>

### **Annotated Bibliography for Artists:**

Fabricus, K. (1998). Incredible shadow art created from junk. *Environmental Graffiti* [Web site]. Retrieved from <http://www.environmentalgraffiti.com/featured/incredible-shadow-art-created-from-junk/12265?image=1>

Tim Noble and Sue Webster are British born artists who create art from junk and then project light against the art to create shadows that appear to make an entirely different object or form than what is seen when viewing the sculpture directly. They have exhibited their work worldwide in major museums.

The work, *White Trash (With Gulls)* is an early trash based piece using six months of household rubbish and a pair of dead seagulls. The shadow image of the heap of rubbish projected onto the wall forms two figures (self -portraits of the artists) taking a cigarette and wine break. The surprising imagery that results from this shadow play shows us that what you see initially may not be the original intention.

Graffiti, E. (2010). The army of trash figures slowly conquering the world. *1-800 Recycling* [Web site]. Retrieved from <http://1800recycling.com/2010/06/amazing-trash-people-sculptures-ha-schult/>

H. A. Schult is a German artist, who is well known for his public installations. Schult is elated in that today we are free to make art from all materials, even trash. And he says “in no other era has there been anything like this dialogue between art and everyday life”. A former student of Joseph Beuys, he has also been compared to the artist Christo.

*Trash People*, 1996, is an army of 1000 statue like soldiers made from waste products, crushed cans, and electronic trash. First assembled in Xanten near the Dutch border of Germany, this public installation, which encourages interaction, has also been viewed around the world.

Graham, C. (2012). Clare Graham [Web site]. Retrieved from <http://www.claregraham.com>

Clare Graham is a Canadian artist and collector who creates recently “recycled art” from throw away materials. His studio is located in the foot hills of Los Angeles and he creates for the entertainment industry as well as local and worldwide stages. He incorporates bottle caps, buttons, soda cans, pop tops, scrabble tiles, tin, paint by number panels, dominoes and swizzle sticks into his creations. He also maintains quantities of other recycled materials and castoffs.

From soda cans Graham has made tiled and hammered lounge chairs, tables that look like quilted mosaics, and hanging boxes dangling swizzle sticks. His work could be characterized as sophisticated folk art using the materials of our culture and era.

Lefas-Tetenes, M. (2008). Empire/state: Artists engaging globalization. *The Brooklyn Rail* [Web site]. Retrieved from <http://brooklynrail.org/2002/08/artseen/empirestate-artists-engaging-globalization> and Villani Editions (n.d.). Fatima Tuggar. [Web site]. Retrieved from [http://www.villanieditions.com/cgi/VIL\\_artist.pl?artist=tuggar](http://www.villanieditions.com/cgi/VIL_artist.pl?artist=tuggar)

Fatimah Tuggar is a Nigerian born artist who juxtaposes African scenes with American life in a manipulated montage form. She received her MFA from Yale.

Fatimah Tuggar’s computer-manipulated montages show women and children from rural Africa among skyscrapers, railroad tracks, computers, and telephones. Clashing rural domesticity with urban technology, these works bring to mind Hannah Hoch’s gendered collages. Their formal disjunction foregrounds our own blind spot about women’s lives in African countries.

In *Working Woman*, 1997, Tuggar refers to recycling of computer parts outside of the US, in a manipulated montage of a rural African woman with a computer, and telephone. The woman is also wearing African fabrics, originally produced by industry in Indonesia, Holland, and England

and a small Western style fashionable handbag can be seen in the lower right corner of this montage.

Otley, K. (2012). Kathleen Otley [Web site]. Retrieved from <http://otleyart.com>

Los Angeles born artist Kathleen Otley uses natural materials in her art work suggestive of a more primitive culture. Her work is included in the American Craft Museum's permanent collection. Begun as artifacts her artwork tells ancient stories using three-dimensional media such as dyed willow and encaustic methods which she then transforms into symbolic contemporary primitive art.

*Zen Series Boxes* consist of bird figures using encaustic methods and woven copper. She also includes Japanese calligraphy, stones, bamboo and fragments from 8-10th century manuscripts of Japanese folktales into her work.

#### **Annotated Bibliography for Organizations/Reviews/Exhibitions/Statements:**

Contemporary Jewish Museum. (2012). Do not destroy: Trees, art, and Jewish thought [Web site]. Retrieved from [http://www.thecjm.org/index.php?option=com\\_ccevents&scope=exbt&task=detail&oid=58](http://www.thecjm.org/index.php?option=com_ccevents&scope=exbt&task=detail&oid=58)

San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum's current exhibit, *Do Not Destroy: Trees, Art, and Jewish Thought*, explores the tree in Jewish tradition, through the eyes of contemporary artists, to give a fresh meaning. The tree is a universal symbol in Judaism and now represents global environmental concerns. Bal Taschit is a commandment from the Torah that forbids the destruction of trees during war time and was later revised by Rabbinic Judaism to include all of nature from harm. The exhibit is on display through September 9, 2012.

Cool Globes (2010). Hot ideas for a cooler planet. Public art with a purpose [Web site]. Retrieved from <http://www.coolglobes.com>

This public art exhibit is being used to raise awareness and to inspire solutions to climate change. Begun as an outgrowth of Clinton's 2005 global initiative, and founded by Wendy Abrams, this exhibit features an array of manipulated globes. This site even has lesson plans and artwork.

Dreaming Zebra Foundation. (2010). [Web site]. Retrieved from <http://www.dreamingzebra.org/>

This non-profit foundation provides a free art recycling program to the public. Donations of reusable art and musical supplies are matched to recipients who have requested materials for arts education purposes. Recipients include schools, at risk youth programs, specialized programs, other non-profits, etc.

Kobena, M. (2008). *Exiles, diasporas, and strangers*. Boston, MA: M.I.T Press. Retrieved from <http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?ttype=2&tid=11413>

In this review of *Exiles, Diasporas and Strangers* the author/editor Kobena writes about examined life changing journeys that transplanted artists and intellectuals from one culture to another, clearly studying how migration, exile and displacement have shaped modern art. He also writes about the different conditions and aesthetic strategies that make up the artists' experience.

McCue, K. (2002). The extraordinary things project: Study of contemporary art through material culture. Retrieved from <http://kaz.art2xs.com/mccatalog.pdf>

This is a project that creates a visual and intellectual dialogue of contemporary art from the perspective of material culture. It looks at individual artists and the way they use material culture in their work. Curator, Kaz McCue, was concerned with potential meanings of materials and artifacts. Artists involved in this project had the ability to transform cultural materials and build a connection to their work through recognition, memory and iconography (McCue, 2002).