

DIGITAL TRASH: HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS FROM THE BIRTH OF  
THE TRASH GIF REVOLUTION TO THE DAWN OF THE SPAM ART  
REBELLION ( A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DEGENERATIVE ARTS)  
Collaborative writing by Jay Delay and an Ai Language  
Learning Model

Let me be clear – we should be encouraging the artwork creation of our community and artists. That is the core of what this is all about. What is threatening is the control and money that is gained through this. We the artists have come together to try to preserve our community by NOT setting a limit on the quality of art and the selection of artists. Our goal is NOT to censor freedom of speech and expression or to keep our community pre-approved on who can participate. We are collectively making a public statement about this. This is not about picking sides. The equation is one in which an artist is given a ticket to the arena when the artist doesn't need a ticket to play. Degenerative artists overall asset value in the global economy is minimal financially, but they have the cumulative effect of reducing social inequality and consequently, the extent to which working people are benefitted by the participation of the proletariat. If we create an atmosphere of support we may be able to lift this in a positive direction and a balanced and respectful economy can be achieved.

Recently there was a discussion about "TRASH GIFS" and "Spam Art" by a curator at the Museum of Modern Art. At first glance they were mutually exclusive ideas. Spam Art is the derogatory term for works of art made outside of a museum context AKA "digital graffiti". "TRASH GIFS" is a label placed on the work of such artists, as a verdict on their poor taste. The trash artists want to help people understand that while they are looking at their environment, they are actually experiencing art and can have the same feelings of

being transported as the artist, which can make them feel more connected to their existence. Spam artists aim to disperse digital graffiti freely throughout a global virtual system of web based art galleries.

Trash art is a generally speaking a movement created for the sole purpose of depicting an image of a trash can that has also been created. Browsing through various sites such as F-stop, Flickr, Dribbble, Shutterstock, and DeviantArt, you may come across an interesting and engaging collection of creative individuals. It is an art form with a near limitless range. It also helps that there are several sites out there which have groups of people from all across the globe sharing their images of trash bins and it is easy to find them with an image search engine. Not so with anti-trash artists Keith Cartwright and anti-spam artist Nick Scarpa. Their art was critiqued with equal vigor by artists of all stripes and at every level of art history, both before and after the inevitable tear-filled call for the downfall of all things artistic.

They both said that our gallery's cheap circulation model and extravagant trash art collection had given too much power to amateurish creators to channel this wealth into a wild spam artwork collection that no one could afford. They noted that then more amateurish collectors appeared in response.

#### A CANDID DISCUSSION BETWEEN A CURATOR AND CRYPTOART COLLECTOR

So... what are the facts?" A curator asks as she stands in awe. This is about what appears to be the cosmetic reflection of something that is essentially disgusting. The apparent effort is quite low, in my opinion. (The curator is less impressed and moves away) But that

said, this is a great piece of visual beauty, and one I think is meaningful."

TRASH TRASHED by Xavier Gaba, which created uproar due to its stark and dynamic juxtaposition between images of destruction and objects removed from the scenes. After some discussion on twitter some posters rapidly blocked users and others spewed hatred.

#### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REAL ART AND THE CREATIVE SECT OF THE MOVEMENT

One of the vital differences between real art and creative art is that the latter can be reduced to mass production and re-presented. The key to real art is that only a few can afford to purchase a copy or once. On the other hand, post-contemporary art can be everywhere and in all places today. And this art is already a product of the highly productive system of the entire commodity-producing economy. Degenerative Art and virtual commodities should be used to fund the creation of a digital currency of art to preserve and protect the valuable things.

#### THE HISTORY OF TRASH ART BEFORE THE DAWN OF THE SPAM ART REVOLUTION

Many years ago, Vladimir Tolstoy said that a really great artist is someone who goes to an industrial factory and makes little raw material out of which really great art is born. Then, these artists become 'stock images' and sold to everyone in the world as copies. These are artists made copies of things in visual format. Copies can be bought and sold, and changes to a small percentage of the work can be added at virtually no cost to the artist. Change is from none to all, since there is little or no sales to take place. Since it is free to alter and cheap to

distribute more trash gifs accumulated. There is only the artist and his/her subject.

To me this is not a potential issue but a creative opportunity to disperse limitless copies of free art, which gave birth to a movement now known as spam art. Digital graffiti artist hidden in stalls started sending art to random electronic addresses and people responded by creating e-artworks to give freely to the virtual public. This called into question how to define "art". Was art "just" propelling a message, like digital graffiti or performing without a form or medium? Was it a financial investment tool used to transfer monetary value. Or was it in an effort to create something to be seen by someone in the future? Perhaps even to change the way we perceive our own world? Whatever the interpretation, my definition of art began evolving.

The formation of any spam or trash art collective, can be traced back to the publication of random addresses who were sending unsolicited electronic visual images to be deposited into said accounts. That is the genesis of the above, but if you know how to interpret symbols and pictures you can see that with a supercomputer. You could easily have your friends do it and you could have a flash video link that can open up all your photos on a website. Those that view the flash link can send you messages with pictures and symbols to extract. This code was actually sent on top of the photo of ME, and in the next image is written the movements of my Heart's DNA through the 3rd eye. If you go to the link and type in the commands I provided you will see that they will allow you to extract all of the visual data we have ever produced.

In an ironic twist of fate, the Spam Art Society that represented a primal modernist approach in lower

Alabama accidentally 'discovered' the movement of the Situationists in France, a break from that society that it could not easily welcome. There is a line in Gaudí's "Desire to Live" that summed up the fundamental differences between the two groups: 'You see a difficulty... and you want to solve it, for you want to be in that problem, but not in the conditions of that problem.' It seems more logical that Marshall McLuhan would predict the future of digital trash art polluting the global village of online art galleries, which would later be impacted by the crash and subsequent economic collapse. It's not a coincidence that the "Trash Art" phenomenon was finally able to get its message across and confirm that the "REAL" trash is social and creative fascism.

You can argue that we are still in the digital age of trash, but Social media is already teaching us that digital "trash" is part of the medium of art marketing today. When you throw a link out on your page that looks like something you have created or bought, you are actually placing yourself in the service of the visual marketing machine. Art galleries would later respond in kind by creating an art-focused recycling system called Project L.U.L.E (Less Trash Art, Less Litter).

In Project L.U.L.E a particular artist named Shannon Bruce has paid homage to the cars by rendering them as super fat art-deco pimp dolls in the form of narrow-body cabs. After cruising all over Manhattan in as many of the old city's cab cabs as he could catch. Bruce also realized that by being able to create and be truly conspicuous by being loud and/or hyper-mas Images of pernicious trash vandals might appear as urban legends, but this will become more and more apparent in the future, when art galleries are financially competing against each other over which businesses will be most

successful in exploiting this next generation of public waste - the advent of "Third World art laundering" also predicted by Mcluhan as the ultimate irreparable scenario. In some cases such as the recent woes of Yousuf Karsh or Man Ray , we see rich and wealthy collectors attempt to take over a group of Degenerative artists led by Spam Artist Clive Bell.

This was during the 1970s-80s and it soon devolved into an ugly power struggle. Mcluhan offered a very different analysis: his view was that the art market in the developed world was fundamentally being hijacked by art laundering wealthy individuals and states aiming to buy and sell works, while claiming them to be "art" for profit. When anyone asks about the real character of art, the current paradigmatic debate is framed by Guy Debord and his post-contemporaries. This outdated practice of conceptual art and branding is wholly unlike what we call genuine art, which is a minority pursuit of a subset of the population.

Calling Degenerative Art "art" as it once was (and it always was whose value, upon analysis, was inflated and whose origins were garbage. The market, which they thought was being flooded with bullshit art, was actually being dominated by a small group of arrogant money-men who were able to buy and sell a full range of things: conceptual art, photography, sound recordings, illuminated manuscripts, literature, magazines, stamps, and virtual real estate.

Rather than being driven by creative forces, they were moved by price and an illusion of quality: something that their adversaries could never begin to understand. Neither Trash or Spam Artists were prepared to compromise; rather, they wanted to dismantle the whole system, whether by working with the real markets to sell or giveaway depictions of junk, or by spreading

the word about the true value of art to get them to realize their ideals.

The result was the corollary of solidarity and groups and processes that still exist today: artistic movements of anarchic expression, born from the strife of dictatorship. These art movements were constantly moving away from once-common, very ambitious ideals; they sought to satisfy the needs of a totally fluid and transient society. In order to find such an ideal it is necessary to disestablish modern society, not the state or its prerogatives, but the state itself. This has already been accomplished for decades, on an indefinite scale. (The real revolutionary elite which is called the "classical" left, since in our view the intellectual champions of the "classical" system must necessarily remain anonymous.

Unlike previous art movements catering to the bourgeois vernacular, degenerative art movements that made no pretensions of social, political or artistic significance were by and large a source of envy and resistance among upper middle-class society. Taking responsibility for the impossible goal of having a popular, yet radical artistic influence, the bourgeoisie embraced art from every possible direction, including the large variety of pretensions of such radical art movements as Modernism and Futurism.

#### TRASH ART CRITICISM AND LITERATURE

The Spectacle, published in 1928, uses the name Adorno several times in its many uses of the term, typically to describe a certain affect that is triggered by the act of looking at something undesirable, even something designed to appeal to the vanity of the self-absorbed. The name is also frequently used in the context of the aesthetic effects that arise from crowds, which make

for a believable chaos, a convincing collective, or a considered spectacle.

Adorno did not use the Spectacle directly to explain why society should be structured in such a way as to retain the illusion of a passive individual (such as the spectacle) rather than a confident writer. The following excerpts were excluded from this text in the original trash art manifesto:

We the people know what terror is. It is fear. Fear for our children. It is fear of my friends. It is fear of our planet. It is fear that our world can no longer be this way.

Our planet cannot sustain the slaughter of ourselves and our children and all our loved ones. They must be free.

First the animals must be free, then the plants and the water and the air. Until we let the earth and its children live, until we stop killing them and until we let them heal, our children will not have the resources if we trash the planet.

All of this was quickly ignored upon deletion and eventually modern art criticism was replaced by petty insults and vile epithets. Several artists, collectors, and virtual galleries refused to participate in our social media channels, and those that did, usually used the same insult format against each other. Upon asking around, we have found that the online community's war of words has already been started. A hostile nastiness surrounded various artists in a cycle of enmity and two-faced spite. As the cycle intensified it led to boycotts, and calls for personal attacks against artists. My first brush with the shit pile happened in January 2015 when a discussion of art references by



Twitterelf led to a very poorly veiled threat of throwing all my art onto a 10 foot pole, and upon further peer pressure review I began to see trash and spam in a new light.

#### REFERENCES

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excerpts from "TRASH ART: WE CAN" A Manifesto written in Three parts by Three separate Trash artists appear courtesy of RARIBLE Industries

Along with pieces from "MEMOIRS OF A SPAM ARTISTS: CHECK YOUR SPAM FOLDER FOR MORE INFORMATION" courtesy of MINT BASE

#### Photo CREDITS

"Collecting the Trash" from the EAA 2017 Convention at the Convention Center on Saturday, August 29, 2017. (Photo: Nikki Breidenbach/Detroit Free Press)

Jay Lofahl was tired of getting puked on by "designer poopers" in his own parking lot. When the councilman took a look at an especially nasty parking spot in his Jane B. Foster Park neighborhood, he knew he'd found the perfect photograph.

## Review of "DIGITAL TRASH"

A Modern Art Critics review of "Digital Trash"  
by VIX VAPORWAVE

Most post-modern art manifestos revealed an unending succession of deconstructions and rediscoveries in which a broad spectrum of images are revisited and/or re-imagined.

On the one side of the TRASH ART argument is the view of the artists as participants in a species-wide process of becoming, of reascencing, recasting, radicalisation, re-affirming, or...crashing through, and into . But given the cumulative nature of contemporary art, whose shifts to the online medium have inevitably undermined the sense of a narrative , post-narrative production (making art of time, while rejecting the link between narrative and function), how much distance does it take to create a work that stands up to the label of 'postmodern?' In any case, the 'existential effect' of Chaplin's Mickey Mouse in its earliest incarnation is a monument to the post-modern form, that which is extravagant and somehow meaningless.

Of all the art manifestos that have ever been written about TRASH GIFS or Spam Art, one OF the most concise and clear articulations of what we're doing and why we're doing it was by Cindy Gallop in her 2000 book, Metadata, a Foreword by Christopher Alexander and "A San Francisco Notebook" with Amy Webb.

She cited a number of quotes that summarized the essence of modern digital media, including:

And when you read those of us on this side of the wall, including your "why," it's common sense – and shouldn't surprise anyone with more than a passing familiarity with data and economics and modern art markets.

The short version: when we say you can only go forward, we mean that.

In fact, that quote is such a useful shorthand for "digital artists", that it can be extended into a modern shorthand for "the creative act."

And as a reminder of how the creative act works for digital artists, below you will find an interesting explanation and Q&A of the Sveriges Riksbank's latest statement on on the possibility of smart contractual obligation.

"Artists earn from work," writes the Swedish national bank, in its letter to the Swedish S&P downgrading it's own fiat currency as an asset. "After more than ten years of operations in Sweden, Sveriges Riksbank is familiar with the potential risks to the stability of the national currency. More in the area of market manipulation. There is a strong and growing demand for the use of cryptocurrencies in the art market.

More importantly how does the emergence of the blogosphere engender this? I have recently been doing a lot of reading on the practice of social network painting, and I have been influenced by this work. I was subsequently moved to take a more serious look at waste management and time. In a recent article it forced me to really look at the art blogosphere, the rise of spam blogging, and the emergence of digital trash as a performance medium, with the stated intention of asking why I now feel as if I have been staring for years into a grave.

Somewhere around the middle of that article I reached a point where the choice for all of us to consume art and art criticism should not be an easy one. I had watched my hero, John Waters, make such careful and well-thought-out choices about the content of his films, which, at least in my own slightly cynical mind, have a sense of integrity and the honesty that should accompany any film, or with any art or literature. No matter how well thought-out, refined, and highly creative it is, it must be destroyed in a glorious trash art fire, or else it will enter the canon of art and you'll suddenly find yourself in the lecture hall, not the opera house or local juke joint.

You may ask yourself how does all of this relate to Digital Trash and the historical accounts of degenerative online artists using multiple visual internet networks as a platform. If you have read the previous posts of this series, you would have realized that the above criticism has nothing to do with the capacity of Digital Trash to sustain itself. We agree with Wired writer Philip Jodidio who argued that Digital Trash is a huge business. He wrote:

At first glance, that seems like a cop-out, since someone making a video game or digitally painting a painting is obviously pretty big in the digital arts world. Indeed, it is true that many years ago, the artist whose most famous work was a bootleg video of MTV's 'Pitbulls Playhouse' was Hideo Kojima' but you'd be hard-pressed to find anyone that agrees with Spencer, that video games are in fact art, or that large amounts of digital artwork have become art.

If that's the case, then how can we explain the steady increase in the number of video games on my desk or on my bookcase? Why do art books like Gourmet Cellar'mag not merely a traditional book, but a collection of

well-crafted, meticulously detailed prints of Luigi which are now art.

Art. That word: hard to describe. I always start with my own inability to describe what art is to people. "Art" is a term we use when we mean something that doesn't appear in our everyday language. It's something that most of us can't see or feel but that exists all around us in the things we take for granted. Why would anyone take an artist's work for granted?

Art is the distinct spirit that sometimes encodes or re-encodes in different ways than the language. A book can be about Socrates, but it can also be about a spider. Can you imagine a book that can be written about spiders? It's impossible. A child can become a teacher, but you also can be a teacher that is able to teach a child about how spiders work. Is this difference a red herring?

This is exactly why the reader who is confronted with the ideas of digital trash may fall into a trap and conclude that the concept of "digital trash" was entirely devoid of idea. It is not! It is simply a reflection of what our society is currently a-mess-ing about, especially our children. Since time immemorial, a story has held the power to connect and teach - and the more dramatic the story, the more lives it has impacted, as we are all bound to relate to it regardless of gender or age. In fact, rather than asking this movement to be a continuation of computer art or digital art. My strong advice is that we should ignore all metaphors. Recycling of digital trash (digital graffiti or digital graffiti artists) can come up with an art that is distinct from computer art or typography as art. Go beyond the metaphor that it is just a fake graphic designer. Realize that everybody uses these graphic elements to reveal themselves. STOP

considering it a special skill or a talent. Everything used on screen is used every day. So it should NOT be a special skill or talent. Just know that the skill will be used to reveal the true self. Don't waste your time with those metaphors. Just recognize that your mouse and keyboard will be taken by your enemy. Once you open your eyes and stop thinking that it's a special skill or talent, we will all be free from the prison of your judgement.

### The Plague of Digital Mice and Suits

If you still think that you are a uniquely talented artist, then by all means be that; but you must also realize that you are better off trying to analyze and improve what you do, rather than expecting us to be chosen by you. Here are three tips to help trash artists overcome the increasingly nasty mind games our opponents are playing.

1. Think of digital technology as a potential threat; be it in your own work or as the tools of your enemy. So many talented people – and not just computer artists – are taking the easy way out by not being vigilant about privacy and control over their own data.

2. We must stand firm against the bad actors, but also work together to hold the trash artists and spam creators more accountable for their power to influence the public's perception of humanity's waste.

3. I believe we must become a society of persons rather than of things. We can do this, by learning to turn that instinctual sense of personal space and comfort into a genuine experience.

We must resist the urge to create an entire class of "representative people". I, for one, am sure that we do NOT need a separate class of people to represent us. The fact is, we are all human beings, and that means we

are capable of expressing our feelings and visions through art.

We are a DEGENERATIVE ARTISTS. We will continue to deepen and disseminate this truth until we create a culture that is reflected in the products you consume. Only then will we be free.

So thank you, film, art, music, video games, television industry, and online creators.

The Internet has made a drastic difference in how young people communicate with each other, but the young people themselves have ignored the power of the web. But, as we all know, looking at the world through an Internet filter is like looking through a picture in a book.

The following except was originally omitted from the original publication. We have chosen to include portions of the text here to give the reader a broader context:

Thank you to the publishers and TV networks who use the arts to entertain the masses; to the artists who use the arts to express their dreams and goals; and to the record producers and journalists who tell the stories in song and words, the news in prints and pictures, and the books in which the truth is put to book.

Thank you to the people who teach others to use the arts, artists and entrepreneurs. The support and encouragement that has enabled so

Thank you for the work you've done, and the work we're doing now to distribute a message of love, not hate, to the world.

Love one another.

Love ALL human beings, no matter their trappings of personal identity or localized culture or creeds.

Love on all levels.

Our love will spread to all corners of the globe, and time is running out for the Earth.

To join the living Earth, we must unite.

The implementation of the Global Declaration of Human Rights is something we all must implement.

Organizations will be formed, people will be mobilized, as we sing a new song.

This is a true Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This declaration affirms every human being's inalienable rights to health, education, security, dignity, equality, freedom from violence, freedom from fear and respect for the right of the child to be born and to have a global family that is humanity. To live their lives full of joy and creativity with safety and security, and fair and equal opportunities.

This will not only create new doors, but open the old ones to people from all walks of life.

Everyone is capable of becoming a champion of the rights enshrined here.

Let us all reiterate our aim: from our tiny island, which we call EARTH.



