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Digital Media Foundations / COMD 1112

What We Learned in Class 4/6/20

Modernism is a movement that revolves around the development of modern society and the industrial advances it brought. Artists began to use new imagery, materials and techniques to create artworks that they used to reflect their hopes for the future. Some things involved with Modernism are a rejection of old ideas, wanting innovation, and experimentation with forms such as shapes and lines. Some examples of Modernism can be seen as a little clean cut, and almost very utopian. Modernism put their hopeful ideas of the future into visuals.

Postmodernism is where things get a lot more fun! Postmodern art consists of many art styles that sought to contradict some aspects of modernism, and to make art more accessible. Mediums such as installation art, conceptual art, performance art, and multimedia emerged from the Postmodern movement. Many Modernists are still very uncomfortable with Postmodernism as they are forced to face how outdated their “modern” visions looked. In general, Postmodern is a lot more experimental.

We also watched a fantastic TED talk by Stefan Sagmeister about finding inspiration for your designs and art in happiness. He told a story about how when he was superstitious, He would look for clues about how a trip would go. For example,

when he went to Hong Kong, he saw a sign that said “Winner”, and he was so happy in Hong Kong in the beginning that he ended up accepting a job offer there. While the job in Hong Kong ended up really not working out, he did take the lessons he learned there with him. He now lists every happy moment in his life and uses those things in his design work.

Sagmeister places a heavy emphasis on choosing what makes you happy when designing, because then you’ll find passion in every project you get. He relates everyday happy moments to the projects he designs, and wants that sense of happiness to be conveyed to his audience. Even when that message shouldn’t all be happy, he finds happiness and therefore purpose in his work. He even went as far as to create The Happy Film.

Sagmeister’s work could definitely be considered Postmodern, and he could even be considered a controversial figure in the design world. I’ve personally been a fan of Sagmeister’s work for years and find his pieces uncomfortable and beautiful to look at. I think the work he’s done in the music industry, such as designing for David Byrne and Brian Eno, is incredibly fascinating. Something I especially love is how he uses his own handwriting in most of his work instead of just searching through fonts to find the perfect one. He’s also extremely attractive and I normally wouldn’t add that but I needed one more sentence to make a paragraph so sorry in advance.