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INTERACTION BETWEEN CONTRIBUTORS: PROCESSES OF AN ART PIECE FORMATION

First, I was born in Russia in a family with mostly Russian origins, but later, approximately at the age of 10, I moved to Estonia. This position made me still interested in Russian culture, but denied me from participating in cultural life directly. I couldn't visit exhibitions, concerts, meet-ups, etc. The Internet still gave me an opportunity to observe all of it remotely. I could also occasionally visit some of the Russian artists on their tours, but these exceptions still left me with a feeling of watching from afar. As for my education, I graduated from secondary school (põhikool) at Sakala Eragümnaasium and upper secondary school (gümnaasium) at Tallinna Kesklinna Vene Gümnaasium. Both schools are located in Tallinn, the capital city of Estonia. Currently, I am studying Applied Anthropology at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin.

My main interests in art are in the domains of poetry and music. I try to be open to other forms of art, but often find myself less invested in them. I used to play in a band, where I was mostly occupied with writing lyrics. We would sometimes perform on stage, but for the most part, these activities ended in 2019, leaving me mostly as an art recipient, rather than a creator. At some point, I attempted to write a blog with my reflections on events that happen to me, but perhaps this direction is yet to be pursued more thoroughly.

In this paper, I will contest the idea of separating art creators and recipients by describing how something becomes art. I will list numerous ways of an art piece formation with examples that show how different sides make contributions that lead to art enrichment.

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I.

Art is the process of passing an incoherent idea. An idea must stay incoherent, as incoherency opens up space for different interpretations that can and will change the understanding of the original message depending on variables that are not directly connected to it. An idea can be either a piece of information or emotion. Obviously, any form of art, such as a painting, a sculpture, or a song transmits incoherent ideas. But this process can also be either intentional or not, and since we constantly amplify everything we do with unintentional sub-actions, even most of the conversations between people become pieces of art. Some of the most exact and strict information exchanges (for instance, telling another person that $2 + 2 = 4$) will not hold an incoherent idea itself, but the context of this exchange opens up a large field of potential additional idea passages. It could be the surrounding area or some other variables that will either influence the recipient or the creator.

Now I've mentioned that the context can influence both sides of the art process, let us take a closer look at this interaction. The act of passing that I mentioned in the first sentence doesn't specify, whether an incoherent idea should be included by the creator, internalized by the recipient, or done both actions at the same time. As long, as one of the sides is involved in the process of the passage, an incoherent idea appears. If anybody ends up in a situation of grasping or giving an incoherent idea, whether this act was noticed or not, an artistic expression is made. It means that a recipient of art can be and will be the reason why art exists to the same extent, as a creator. There could be no creator in the first place, as we often call phenomena produced by nature art.

I would like to mention a much more contemporary topic in the question of art creation. Recently we have seen the appearance of many incredible neural networks that generate pictures based on the description we give them (for example, DALL-E¹). Even though neural networks gather a lot of pictures in their database to compound another picture, the end product does not pass any human ideas included in the original artworks. Do neural machines create art pieces? According to the art definition that I'm suggesting, as long as there are people who look at such generated images, we certainly state that neural networks do create a basis for art formation. We are yet to witness the limits of our technologies in that direction, but we can already look at current advancements and let our minds be captivated by that "artificial" art.

¹ "DALL-E: Creating Images from Text," January 5, 2021, accessed August 14, 2022, <https://openai.com/blog/dall-e/>.

II.

However, a question arises from the emphasis on art reception and claiming such a broad scope of acts as art. Why do people spend so many resources on making specific art pieces? Perhaps the idea is that separating some of the art from everyday life is a way to pass the same incoherent ideas in different settings. To think of it, the internet became one of the most sufficient tools to spread art, letting us experience the same music, paintings, books, etc. while our surroundings stay diverse. Each surrounding will lead to a generation of different ideas, but the original work will stay the same and create directions for thoughts. So, having access to specific art pieces allows recipients to create their layers of artistic participation. This is why people enjoy sharing their favorite artworks. It allows them to not only witness art but to act on it, to enrich it in their way. Art recipients often do not want to be just recipients, they want to be contributors.

Let's take a closer look at the term "contributors" that I just added with a great example of my experience with Alexander Bashlachev's song "Petersburg's wedding" (original name is "Петербургская свадьба" and the title can have different interpretations in English). I was first introduced to this song at age of 14 not in its original form, but as an adaptation made by the band Splean (СПЛИН). The lyrics are the same, but the music itself is nowhere similar to the original version. I got to learn that the lyrics were taken from another artist only 6 years later, so my feelings and thoughts about the song were formed without any links to Bashlachev himself, who is the creator in this situation. So, in the first place, Splean's artists were recipients that decided to become contributors, but then they formed a separate art piece (although tightly connected to another one), which places them in a position of a creator. I was a recipient of Splean's art piece.

The next step is about to show my personal enormous possibilities that are based on the fact that I am writing this paper. Since I am mentioning this song, I contribute to ideas that enrich it. If anybody listens to these songs or reads lyrics, their perception will be shaped by my influence from everything included in this text. I can now intentionally mention a specific part of the lyrics that tells to accept one's guilt under rain's birching. Depending on the reader's curiosity, experience, and many other variables this part can be connected to other parts of this text that have nothing to do with the song itself. I have just created incoherent ideas, which makes me a creator and any reader a recipient. Is the term contributor the same as the creator? It depends on whether we accept the possibility of creating something completely original, but this is a completely different topic that I will not pursue here.

As I concluded in the first part, the process of passing an incoherent idea can be formed without an actual connection between a creator and a recipient. However, I only discussed an option of something becoming art by the recipients' agency. Still, there is an option of art being created without a recipient. If a painting was only seen by its creator and immediately burned down, we would still consider the painting art. This leads us to an issue. When a recipient gets access to an art piece, they start thinking about it and enrich it with new ideas. Even though no one can see it, incoherent ideas were passed into their minds. I might be challenging this forum's topic, but is there an actual difference between art creators and recipients? Doesn't the process of art piece formation makes everyone who is involved a creator? Yes, it does.

Art is not something that just exists out there, it is not a phenomenon with a permanent form. The same pieces of art are constantly changing and shifting. This does not happen because, for example, words in a poem will change, but because those who read the poem will change. This feature makes art unique and engaging. Perhaps, I should return to the term contributor to describe how art is made. Both recipients and creators contribute to the art piece in the process of its formation. It is common that a creator makes the biggest contribution, but it can also be the other way around.

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I have explained why it is misleading to separate art creators and recipients in describing art formation and its essential features. Pieces of art can be formed by either side and they will always be changed by later contributions.

REFERENCES

"DALL·E: Creating Images from Text", January 5, 2021. Accessed August 14, 2022. <https://openai.com/blog/dall-e/>