
Problem Set 3: Postmodern Art and Modern Art

Overview of the problem set

This problem set affords you an opportunity to think about postmodern art, and the movement that in some sense spawned it, modern art. In particular, you will be asked to focus on architecture, painting, song lyrics, and cinema. Altogether, this problem set is organized as a set of eight tasks. The tasks pertaining to architecture, painting, and song lyrics, mirror elements of the lesson on postmodern/modern art presented in class. The tasks pertaining to cinema ask you to do a bit of additional work to establish a framework within which to work.

Instructions

1. Perform the eight tasks.
2. Prepare a document which presents your work in a complete, coherent fashion. Be sure to title your document, present a short abstract describing the contents of your document, and then structure your document so that you have a section of work for each of the eight tasks.
3. Save your file as a **PDF document**, and reply to the appropriate email by attaching that **PDF document**.

Task 1: Example of Postmodern Architecture

Please consider the items listed in Appendix A to be the characteristics of postmodern architecture for the purposes of this task. With the characteristics in mind, please search the world for an image of building that you can justifiably assert has a postmodern look to it. Then:

1. Incorporate the image into the document that you are preparing.
2. Justify your assertion that the selected building exemplifies postmodern architecture by articulating how some number (at least 2, preferably more) of the characteristics of postmodern architecture manifest in the building. Please speak specifically about the building in your articulation of how the characteristics are present, rather than merely suggesting that they are present.

Task 2: Example of Modern Architecture

Please consider the items listed in Appendix B to be the characteristics of modern architecture for the purposes of this task. With the characteristics in mind, please search the world for an image of building that you can justifiably assert has a modern look to it. Then:

1. Incorporate the image into the document that you are preparing.
2. Justify your assertion that the selected building exemplifies modern architecture by articulating how some number (at least 2, preferably more) of the characteristics of modern architecture manifest in the building. Please speak specifically about the building in your articulation of how the characteristics are present, rather than merely suggesting that they are present.

Task 3: Example of a Postmodern Painting

Please consider the items listed in Appendix C to be the characteristics of postmodern art for the purposes of this task. With the characteristics in mind, please search the world for an image of painting that you can justifiably assert has a postmodern look to it. Then:

1. Incorporate the image into the document that you are preparing.
2. Justify your assertion that the selected painting exemplifies postmodern art by articulating how some number (at least 2, preferably more) of the characteristics of postmodern art manifest in the painting. Please speak specifically about the painting in your articulation of how the characteristics are present, rather than merely suggesting that they are present.

Task 4: Example of a Modern Painting

Please consider the items listed in Appendix D to be the characteristics of modern art for the purposes of this task. With the characteristics in mind, please search the world for an image of painting that you can justifiably assert has a modern look to it. Then:

1. Incorporate the image into the document that you are preparing.
2. Justify your assertion that the selected painting exemplifies modern art by articulating how some number (at least 2, preferably more) of the characteristics of modern art manifest in the painting. Please speak specifically about the painting in your articulation of how the characteristics are present, rather than merely suggesting that they are present.

Task 5: Example of a Postmodern Lyric

Please consider the items listed in Appendix C to be the characteristics of postmodern art for the purposes of this task. With the characteristics in mind, please search the world for a song with a lyric that you can justifiably assert has a postmodern flavor to it. Then:

1. Incorporate a reference to the song into the document that you are preparing.
2. Copy the lyric of the song into the document that you are preparing.
3. Justify your assertion that the selected song lyric exemplifies postmodern art by articulating how some number (at least 2, preferably more) of the characteristics of postmodern art manifest in the lyric. Please speak specifically about the painting in your articulation of how the characteristics are present, rather than merely suggesting that they are present.

Task 6: Example of a Modern Lyric

Please consider the items listed in Appendix D to be the characteristics of modern art for the purposes of this task. With the characteristics in mind, please search the world for a song with a lyric that you can justifiably assert has a modernist flavor to it. Then:

1. Incorporate a reference to the song into the document that you are preparing.
2. Copy the lyric of the song into the document that you are preparing.
3. Justify your assertion that the selected song lyric exemplifies modern art by articulating how some number (at least 2, preferably more) of the characteristics of modern art manifest in the lyric. Please speak specifically about the painting in your articulation of how the characteristics are present, rather than merely suggesting that they are present.

Task 7: Example of a Postmodernist Film

Research “postmodernist film” (“postmodernist cinema”) to the extent that you are aware of least 4 **characteristics** of postmodernist film. Then:

1. Write down at the characteristics of postmodernist films that you identified - at least four. Furthermore, indicate where you found them. Incorporate this information into the document that you are preparing.
2. With the characteristics that you found in mind, please search the world for a film that you can justifiably assert falls within the postmodernist genre of film. You needn’t watch the film, but you should probably, at the very least, read a review or two of it.
3. Incorporate a reference to the film in the document that you are preparing. (Not necessarily a link to the entire film. In the worst case, simply list title/director/year.)
4. Justify your assertion that the selected film exemplifies postmodernist film by articulating how some number (at least 2, preferably more) of the characteristics of postmodernist film manifest in the film. Please speak specifically about the film in your articulation of how the characteristics are present, rather than merely suggesting that they are present.

Task 8: Example of a Modernist Film

Research “modernist film” (“modernist cinema”) to the extent that you are aware of least 4 **characteristics** of modernist film. Then:

1. Write down at the characteristics of modernist films that you identified - at least four. Furthermore, indicate where you found them. Incorporate this information into the document that you are preparing.
2. With the characteristics that you found in mind, please search the world for a film that you can justifiably assert falls within the modernist genre of film. You needn’t watch the film, but you should probably, at the very least, read a review or two of it.
3. Incorporate a reference to the film in the document that you are preparing. (Not necessarily a link to the entire film. In the worst case, simply list title/director/year.)

4. Justify your assertion that the selected film exemplifies modernist film by articulating how some number (at least 2, preferably more) of the characteristics of modernist film manifest in the film. Please speak specifically about the film in your articulation of how the characteristics are present, rather than merely suggesting that they are present.

Due Date

Please complete your work on this assignment, and reply to the appropriate email, attaching your work in the form of a **PDF file**, by the end of the day on Wednesday, October 27, 2021.

Appendix A: Characteristics of Postmodern Architecture

1. A mixture of architectural styles from past times (perhaps you can find echoes of Victorian greenhouse, art deco cinema, Georgian and so on).
2. A mixture of styles from different places: American-style diner, Italian style pizzeria, London pub, Breton creperie).
3. Numerous ornamental, decorative or pictorial features (murals, reliefs, pediments, clock towers, columns that don't hold anything up).
4. Lots of play between different surfaces, materials and colors (marble effect, plexiglass mirrors, unconcealed girders, smooth plastics, wood, plastic wood, chrome).
5. A high degree of 'fake' (tap any interior column and it is likely to make a hollow sound; examine any flagstone floor and you are unlikely to find it made of real stone).
6. A high degree of 'referencing' (as well as referring to the styles of different times and places, the exterior of the building might echo the shapes and materials of the surrounding area).

Appendix B: Characteristics of Modern Architecture

1. Repetition of a simple shape (squares, rectangles, boxes).
2. Uniformity of design (mostly the same all over).
3. Complete lack of frills (no ornamentation).
4. Harsh, industrial looking materials (especially reinforced concrete).
5. A flat roof (totally impractical in wet countries).
6. Dominance over the surrounding environment (very big, towering over older buildings, neighborhoods were probably flattened to make room for it).
7. An imminent demolition order.

Appendix C: Characteristics of Postmodern Art

1. Impurity of form - images from mass culture contaminate pure abstractions.
2. No narrative structure, no particular ending.
3. Intertextual referencing “on steroids”.
4. Plural coding: Multiple interpretative responses.
5. Between-ness, doubleness, duplicity. Critical and celebratory of the same thing.
6. Playfulness.
7. Pessimism.
8. Idiosyncratic narratives.

Appendix D: Characteristics of Modern Art

1. Purity of form.
2. Coherent, complete experience.
3. Constrained/restrained intertextual referencing.
4. Single interpretative response.
5. Unambiguous message.
6. Careful deliberation.
7. Optimism.
8. Metanarrative.