

Brief History of Art and design

20th-21st century

08 Installation, Performance

(1990–nowadays)

READING

for English lesson



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SUPŠ:UH

Empower **ED**

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READING COMPREHENSION

**Read both texts on two art forms: Installation and Performance!
Answer the text comprehension questions that are provided below
each passage!**

Installation art term

The term installation art is used to describe large-scale, mixed-media constructions, often designed for a specific place or for a temporary period of time.

Installation artworks (also sometimes described as 'environments') often occupy an entire room or gallery space that the spectator has to walk through in order to engage fully with the work of art. Some installations, however, are designed simply to be walked around and contemplated, or are so fragile that they can only be viewed from a doorway, or one end of a room. What makes installation art different from sculpture or other traditional art forms is that it is a complete unified experience, rather than a display of separate, individual artworks. The focus on how the viewer experiences the work and the desire to provide an intense experience for them is a dominant theme in installation art.

Installation art emerged out of environments which artists such as Allan Kaprow, made from about 1957 onward, though there were important precursors, such as Kurt Schwitters's Merzbau 1933, an environment of several rooms created in the artist's own house in Hanover.

From the 1960s the creation of installations has become a major strand in modern art. This was increasingly the case from the early 1990s when the 'crash' of the art market in the late 1980s led to a reawakening of interest in conceptual art (art focused on ideas rather than objects). Miscellaneous materials (mixed media), light and sound have remained fundamental to installation art.

TASK1:

Text Dependent Questions on Installation Art:

1. What is the primary characteristic that distinguishes installation art from traditional art forms such as sculpture?
2. How does the viewer's experience play a role in the definition and impact of installation art as described in the text?
3. According to the text, what historical context led to the emergence of installation art in the late 1950s?
4. What significance does the text place on the materials used in installation art, and how do they contribute to the overall experience?
5. In what ways did the art market crash of the late 1980s influence the development and popularity of installation art in the 1990s?
6. How does the concept of 'environments' relate to the development of installation art, as mentioned in the text?
7. What role do sound and light play in installation art according to the passage, and why are they considered fundamental?

Performance art term

Artworks that are created through actions performed by the artist or other participants, which may be live or recorded, spontaneous or scripted.

While the terms 'performance' and 'performance art' only became widely used in the 1970s, the history of performance in the visual arts is often traced back to futurist productions and dada cabarets of the 1910s.

Throughout the twentieth century performance was often seen as a non-traditional way of making art. Live-ness, physical movement and impermanence offered artists alternatives to the static permanence of painting and sculpture.

In the post-war period performance became aligned with conceptual art, because of its often immaterial nature.

TASK 2:

Text Dependent Questions on Performance Art:

1. What are the two primary characteristics that define performance art, according to the text?
2. How did the perception of performance as a form of art evolve throughout the twentieth century? Provide specific examples from the text.
3. In what ways did performance art serve as an alternative to traditional forms of art like painting and sculpture? Explain using details from the text.
4. Discuss the significance of the terms 'performance' and 'performance art' becoming widely used in the 1970s. Why do you think this shift occurred?
5. What connection does the text draw between performance art and conceptual art during the post-war period? How does this relationship impact the understanding of both art forms?
6. The text mentions "live-ness, physical movement, and impermanence" as key features of performance art. How do these aspects challenge the conventional notions of artistic permanence?
7. Reflect on the historical influences mentioned in the text, such as futurist productions and dada cabarets. How do these movements contribute to the development of performance art?

THE TARGET VOCABULARY

In order to understand the key art concepts on Installation and Performance arts, study the provided multiple explanations!

1. **Mixed Media:** This refers to the use of more than one medium in a work of art. For example, an artist might combine paint with found objects like newspaper or fabric to create a collage. This technique allows for a richer expression of ideas and emotions.
2. **Transformation:** In art, transformation can refer to changing the form, appearance, or nature of an object or concept. An example is a sculpture made from recycled materials, which transforms waste into a piece of art, encouraging viewers to reflect on sustainability.
3. **Installation:** This is an artistic genre that involves creating an immersive environment or experience for the viewer. For example, an installation might involve transforming a gallery space into a forest with sounds of nature, allowing visitors to step into a different world.
4. **Impermanence:** Many artists explore impermanence, which is the idea that things are temporary and constantly changing. An example is sand art, where intricate designs are created only to be washed away by the tide, emphasizing the fleeting nature of beauty.
5. **Strand:** In art, strand can denote a theme or a thread of thought that connects different works. For instance, an artist might explore the theme of identity across multiple pieces, using various techniques and materials to express this concept.
6. **Futurism:** This is an artistic movement that emphasizes modern technology, speed, and dynamic movement. An example is an artwork that captures the essence of a bustling city, using vibrant colours and abstract forms to convey energy and progress.
7. **Interactivity:** Interactive art engages the audience, allowing them to participate in the creation or experience of the work. For example, a digital art installation might change based on the movements of viewers, creating a unique experience for each person.
8. **Sensory Manner:** Art that appeals to the senses goes beyond visual aesthetics. An example is an installation that includes scents, sounds, and textures, creating a multi-sensory experience that immerses the viewer fully.
9. **Immaterial:** This concept refers to art that lacks a physical presence or is intangible. For instance, a performance art piece that exists only in the moment, like a dance, highlights the immaterial nature of some artistic expressions.
10. **Cabaret:** This is a form of theatrical entertainment featuring music, song, dance, and drama, often in a nightclub setting. An example might be an art performance that combines visual art with live music and dance, creating a vibrant, engaging experience.
11. **Reflection:** In art, reflection can refer to both the literal reflection in mirrors or glass and the metaphorical reflection of ideas and emotions. An example is an artwork that uses mirrors to create a dialogue about self-image and perception.
12. **Intense:** This term describes art that evokes strong emotions or reactions. For instance, a powerful painting depicting a historical event can create an intense emotional response, prompting viewers to confront difficult truths.

Analogies for Understanding

1. **Mixed Media as a Recipe:** Think of mixed media like a recipe that combines various ingredients to create a unique dish. Just as a chef might mix spices, vegetables, and proteins to create a tasty meal, an artist uses different materials and techniques to create a visually dynamic piece of art.

2. **Installation as a Themed Party:** Imagine an installation as a themed party where everything is designed to create a specific atmosphere. Each element, from decorations to music, contributes to an overall experience, similar to how an installation uses various components to immerse the viewer in a particular concept or feeling.

In order to check understanding of the main terms on Installation and Performance art forms, do the multiple-choice quiz!

1. Which term best describes artwork that combines different types of artistic media in a single piece?

- A. Intense
- B. Mixed media
- C. Installations
- D. Transformation

2. What word refers to the quality of being temporary or not lasting forever?

- A. Impermanence
- B. Reflection
- C. Strand
- D. Futurism

3. In art, what term describes the way a piece engages multiple physical senses?

- A. Interactivity
- B. Intense
- C. Sensory manner
- D. Immaterial

4. Which word describes entertainment venues popular in the early 20th century for avant-garde performances?

- A. Installations
- B. Cabarets
- C. Strands
- D. Transformations

5. What term refers to something that lacks physical substance?

- A. Intense
- B. Strand
- C. Immaterial
- D. Impermanence

6. Which artistic movement was focused on speed, technology, and the future?

- A. Futurism
- B. Sensory manner
- C. Mixed media
- D. Interactivity

7. What term describes large-scale artworks specifically created for and installed in particular locations?

- A. Cabarets
- B. Installations
- C. Strands
- D. Mixed media

8. Which word means having or showing great depth of feeling?

- A. Reflection
- B. Intense
- C. Immaterial
- D. Impermanence

9. What term describes the process of changing from one form to another?

- A. Transformation
- B. Interactivity
- C. Futurism
- D. Reflection

10. Which word describes the ability of an artwork to respond to or be modified by viewer participation?

- A. Sensory manner
- B. Strand
- C. Interactivity
- D. Installation