

The Evolution of the Installation of Yayoi Kusama

How Did the Evolution of the Installation of Yayoi Kusama Proceed?

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Abstract—The text deals about the development of Yayoi Kusama's installation. Why Yayoi Kusama was selected? The reason you can simply describe, but actually it's complicate. The simple reason is she has a strong artistic style. One can quickly notice of the nature of her work and recognize. It is exclusively Painting, Sculpture, Installation and Happening and so on. This is really useful to analyze. The other reason is the time Yaomi Kusama was working in. The artist was strongly influenced in the time of puberty by the system of arts. From the study can be read not only the development of art history, but can also see how her art has changed over time with the development of society, politics and economy. Under this aspect, the value of the study is rightly given.

Keywords—Yayoi Kusama; installation; Video Installation

I. INTRODUCTION

Yayoi Kusama, born in 1929 in Japan, is now regarded as the most popular, most versatile and most successful international artist in Japan. Mid-sixties was her work in the same breath with the minimal art, monochrome painting; the new trends in Europe and as a precursor to the Pop Art. (1)

Throughout the text, I arranged chronologically as Yayoi Kusama's work in turn arose. After moving to the US her artistic movements have changed. In the text, I tried to explain why Kusama changed and how these changes came under the historic, political, economic and social various aspects.

The first section is about the time of Kusamas youth before 1957. She was born after the first war in Japan and moved in 1957 to the USA. When she was ten years old, she began painting. Because of her hallucinations she painted mostly her points and plants. At 19 she went to the Kyoto School of Art and Crafts and learned Japanese painting. In 1955, she had seen the work of the American painter Georgia O'Keeffe at a thrift shop. Then she got in touch with the artist and was preparing to move to the US.

After she moved to New York in 1957, her art direction of Painting changed to Fabric Sculptures, Installations, Happenings and Video Installations. However, the contents were still their points. Learning about Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism were the source of her development and inspiration to her fabric sculptures. After Fluxus in America had come, she also took the Happening into her form of art. In 1964 Nam June Paik brought the video installation to New York. She also dabbled with video installation. This was an important time in Modern Art. After the 2nd Industrial

Revolution, after the 2nd World War, the old rules of the society changed to new. Likewise the art changed. The traditional art form was destroyed. The evolution took place in all areas of art and expanded the boundaries of art.

In 1973, she returned from America to Japan. She continued to make Paintings, Sculptures and Fabric Happening. 1990, however, she began with Fixed Structure. With the progress of electronic options also her art to Video Installation developed.

II. THE MAIN STAGES OF YAYOI KUSAMA'S INSTALLATION

Yayoi Kusama was born in 1929 in Matsumoto, Nagano Prefecture in Japan. With 10 years she started painting and painted until she moved to the US. This means that she was exclusively devoted to the art of painting until the age of 28 years.

1929, i.e. 11 years after the second industrial revolution and the First World War Japan was still a colony of America. With the Meiji Restoration, Japan had made independently. Japan thus, had made as the first Asian country independently and began his industrial rise.

1912 Japan was strengthened and the First World War began. Japan wanted to expand into Asia. 1918 the First World War was ended. In Japan society had splintered into many parties, among themselves battling for power in Japan. 1929 was the economy, so the economic situation at the end of the world. Japan was at the beginning of the Showa Period. That was exactly the time of Kusama's birth.

She was the daughter of a very rich Japanese family which seed both bred and sold. When she was 10 years old, she got her first to hallucinations.

When she brought her hallucinations on paper, her mother tore these drawings and sent her to the punishment of the procedures work in the fields, because she did not want that her daughter dealt with art. But a doctor noted the psychological problems of Kusama. As Japanese society was at odds inside and Japan became embroiled in the Second World War, Kusama had a gloomy childhood. A river and the flowers that proliferated there were a popular destination of her and inspired her decisively in her art. Kusama was due to her mental illness very suicidal and her mother's reprisals against her art reinforced her inner suffering. However, the painting appeared mentally brightening and had an outlet for her inner conflicts,

through which she could forget all suffering, so that she never committed suicide.

After completion of her schooling Kusama studied Japanese painting at the Kyoto School of Art. At age 23, she had her first exhibition in 1952 in her home in the Matsumots Civic Hall.

When she was 26 years old Kusama discovered in a thrift store a book by the American artist Georgia Totto O'Reef, which impressed her very much. Kusama took contact with O'Reef by letter. The American artist was impressed by the work of Kusama and wrote her that she could recommend her work an art gallery. Then she wanted to immigrate to America, but her mother was against it and gave her no money for it. Finally Kusama got also without much money a visa for the US. But before she left her country, she went again to her river, and burned all her works.

When she arrived in America 1957 she only had 1,000 of her images and almost no money for herself. Until 1973 she stood in America and these 16 years had been the most important phase in her artistic life. This time was especially important for Modern Art, because developed Modern Art in this period from the Traditional Art. From painting on the wall, the art changed to Object Art. Dada, Surrealism, Expressionism, Abstract Expressionism, Pop-art, Installation, Fluxus and Video Installation developed on this path. That was a very big leap in the history of art and influences the art even today. In her 16 years in the US she had developed coming from the painting out Sculptures, Installations and Happenings.

In Dadaism it handing the French artist Marcel Duchamp, who influenced this form of art very much. It was he who brought the Dadaism from Paris to New York. In 1917 he got a finished basic commodity, a so called Readymade Object, in this case, a urinal, a work of art and gave it the name "Fountain." He was the first who broke the barriers of traditional art. The Readymade Objects were the basis of the developing Installation.

In 1957 Kusama came from her in Japan isolated world to the cosmopolitan New York and met Dada, Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism which was the idea of Advangarde in New York. She did not close the new impressions, but took them in and processed them into themselves and in her further artistic development, which led to her Installation.

When she was in New York, she has participated in many group exhibitions in her local start time. At all exhibitions her works were exhibited as a traditional painter with other Japanese artists together. In 1962 she made her first Sculpture, which is "No.1 Accumulation". With this sculpture she tried to change to Readymade Object. She sewed the pattern with soft fabrics with which she covered an armchair. In this way she had liberated the traditional arts and has sustained the art more opportunities and freedoms. After she had created with the chair her first work of this new type, other works, such as a sofa, a table, a chair and a ladder were following "Fig. 1". Thus her form of art changed and thus she got the chance to exhibit with American artists together. In 1962, when she was allowed to exhibit her first new works along with works by Andy Warhol in the Green Gallery, this was the birth of Pop Art.



Fig. 1. Accumulation No. 2

III. THE INFLUENCE OF YAYOI KUSAMA'S ART

Kusama and Andy are both representatives of Pop Art. Who influenced whom is hard to say, because they were both working in the same time and made joint exhibitions. However, it is likely that they have influenced each other.

1963 Kusama made an exhibition the aggregation: "1000 Boats Show". She drew up a boat from clothing materials, which she photographed in black and white and the room in which she exhibited the boat, she covered all around with 999 copies of those photographs. This had the effect that the viewer got lost in the space. Thus she had expanded the space surrounding the work of art as part of the artwork. With this work, she was to know by many people. This work was her foundation for many other works.

In 1965 she created the "Infinity Mirror Room". The walls of the room were lined with mirrors so with that it reflected the objects of space to infinity. The floor of the room was completely covered with many of her Fabric Sculptures. When the observers went into this room, he got a special effect of infinity to feel. This work had a great importance as it opened many more possibilities to the traditional art. She has always tried and applied something new in her artistic development. The infinity mirror space she changed 2 times over time and experimented with her works of art to create something new.

The rise of Fluxus was held in Germany. Dada existed only a relatively short time, because it was too far ahead of his time, it was to advangarde. DADA lacked the ability to mature. However, after four decades, it was possible that the idea of DADA was realized by Fluxus. Different types of artists joined forces to overturn the traditional art of each category, and creative combined, a new artistic significance found.

1966 Kusama made many series of happenings. She took on 14th Street happening in part; she brought her fabric sculptures on the street and lay down on it "Fig. 2".



Fig. 2. Endless Love Show, 1996.

That same year she also made the work "Narcissus Garden" "Fig. 3". She had not been officially invited by the Venice Biennale, but in one night she let put 1500 pieces of iron balls on the place of Italian Pavilion. On second day she put on a kimono, stood on the square, selling iron balls for \$ 2 a piece. She criticized the commercialization of art and said that art should be bought like the vegetables in the supermarket by the people. When the committee came and said that she was destroying the order and should clear the square, she spread her arms over the many iron balls. Thus she surpassed all the other artists who had been officially invited to the Venice Biennale.



Fig. 3. Narcissus Garden, 1966

She also created the Happening "Walking Peace". In doing so she discussed the difficulties and challenges of Asian women in the Western world, where she was dressed in a kimono walking around in the city.

At the time, America was involved with the Soviet Union in the Cold War. Another central theme of the Counter Culture was the Vietnam War. He put mainly young men before existential problems because they were subject of conscription. (4) Later came the movement of feminism. The women wanted to have the same rights as men. They wanted to be on an equal footing. In literature the term Beat Generation emerged which pursued the freedom and peace and was against the war and the industry. Furthermore, it directed against the discrimination of

colored people and homosexuals. The literature reports always what happened in the corresponding periods. In retrospect it can be seen that in the former time in art, literature and art great changes took place. It was a real revolution in all fields. It seems as if someone specifically destroyed the old structures and roots of previous generations, and wanted to install a new belief, so to steer thus uprooted masses better. It can be assumed that the ultra rich society with Rothshild on top which governs the US, this plan of Rothshild Tavistock Institute (Thinktak) was thought ahead and then implemented and brought into action.

The philosophy of the hippies owes the beats very much, which formed for them some kind of parents 'generation, both intellectually as well as at the level of life styles. (5) The Hippies often gathered in large groups and made many events against the war. The flower-power was their "weapon". Kusama always referred to the love and freedom thoughts of the hippy movement. 1967, she started to make her happenings with the hippies together. She used the bare skin of the hippies and the animals as canvas and painted them with her points. The colors of her points in red, yellow and green meant the sun, the moon and the earth. She often made happenings with the hippies on the street, which was very much a sensation, so that she often appeared in the newspapers, it was a lot discussed about her, and thus she became more and more well known. This she made a long time, until 1970. About this time there are a lot of pictures on which she is seen with long lines of hippies, waiting her to be painted with a brush, with their points.

After her lover had died in 1973, she returned to Japan. In these 16 years in which she had not been in Japan, many changes had happened there, so that she had difficulties to reintegrate on the beginning. After World War II, Japan recovered, the economy grew and with these great changes also changed the art. The Japanese artists were also influenced by the Modern Art.

In the 70s and 80s, she experimented with her happenings by exchanging her dots by new components, such as straight lines. She used these straight lines to connect the people with the architecture, art, such as cars and nature. During this time she also continued Fabric Sculptures with straight lines and not with her previously used points.

In 1991 the USSR collapsed and America was the most powerful country of the world. Since the end of the 2nd World War in 1945 there no big war in the world took place, so that the technology, the spiritual life, the arts and culture could develop very strong. People went into a new modern world, which increasingly exploits and destroys the nature until now.

In the mid 80s to late 90s, she was active again in her scene of art. In 1993, she represented Japan at the Venice Biennale. After a long time of trial and experimentation now her art was mature. Thereafter, she was invited very often to the Biennales of many different countries. Her public works are exhibited all over the world.

Yayoi Kusama made a pumpkin series in which she provided the meridians of the pumpkins with dots. She used large and small pumpkins, which were always exhibited in

public spaces "Fig. 4". On the idea of her points and gourds to paint with points she came by an experience in the early years, as she stood in front of a pumpkin and she had the feeling he was talking to her. Then she looked at the pumpkin for a month, trying to fathom the soul of squash.



Fig. 4. Pumpkin, 1994

During the 21st century, life shifted more and more from the countryside to the cities. Globalization was increasingly driven by the Internet. Kusama marketed her art ideas by industry to consumer goods such as jewelry, bags and cloths, by integrating, incorporating or imprinting. Through this connection with her art of basic commodities which took in the industry as an expensive design producing it, she commercialized her art and multiplied her revenue immensely by doing so.

After the advent of computer technology, the electronics led more and more our lives. The machine replaced people more and more. But this new technology also developed very quickly and added the Virtual Reality and the Human-Computer Interaction added newly. These techniques also seized more and more art. These new techniques had evolved from Video Installation. New Media have become increasingly important in art.

Kusama also picked up the new technology and developed from the idea of her old Mirror Room with fabric sculptures, mirrors and neon lights, the pure virtual Infinite Mirror Room. In this she had replaced the fabric sculptures and neon lights of Mirror Rooms by LED lights. After the visitor had entered the room, the door automatically closed behind him. Since the light from the LED light was reflected back into the room very often by the mirror, the observer felt in an entirely new world, like on another planet. This space has been issued in France and America at the present time.

Another work of Kusama is "I'm here, but nothing" "Fig. 5". This is a living room without lighting, on the walls and objects in the room points of fluorescent light were projected. If somebody was in the room, one made by a new, very special visual experience. She is very diligent till today in creating her

work and endeavors in this way to give new experiences to people.



Fig. 5. I'm here, but nothing, 2000

Kusama came from Japan, an eastern country. But made famous she is with her works in the Western world. It is the most famous Japanese artist worldwide. After the 2nd World War Japan was not very cosmopolitan. She was courageous and forward-looking and decided to leave the country to go to America. She was so successful, because her works were very versatile with her creativity and imagination, she always followed the appropriate time and always worked hard and a lot.

What you should not forget is that she lived in a very special time. Her work represents exactly the development of Modern Art. After the 2nd World War, America was the center of the new world era. New replaced the old, the world got a New Order and idea, almost the whole of Modern Art comes from this period, such as Surrealism, Pop Art, Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism, Fluxus, etc. Andy Warhol, Salvatore Dalí, Nam June Paik, John Cage, Joseph Beuys, Susan Sontag, Yoko Ono and The Beatles were artists of the period. Many of them are long dead, but Kusama is still alive and still creating new works of art.

IV. CONCLUSION

Art already existed since the early Stone Age, and it evolved as humans evolved further on. By hand of the exercised techniques in art can be seen how the tools of the people continuously were developed. The content of the works of art reflect the development of the progressively evolving cultures. This means that art is closely linked with politics, economics, history, medicine and technology. They influence each other strongly and thus art is an integral part of the cultures.

Every second the world is changing. Also changed the art and any kind of art are followed by a newer after. Also humans proceed in themselves and the development of new techniques which are both reflected in art.

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