

POVERTY POP
by Papo Colo, 1993

And fantasies appear again in the form of an untranslatable dictionary,
After all, there is no beauty without lies.

Poverty Pop is when popular objects become intellectual language. Their necessity is ornament. The objects speak other languages, a multi-lingual visual transformation. Making the poor look rich is the translation, the medium.

They are not found objects, they are recuperated metaphors, that are dead in their initial purpose and alive in its reuse.

Each generation has found a way to replace this vision, to reveal the different layers of memories and use. To dissect the hidden meanings of things. It's the act of juxtapositions, collisions, incisions and resuscitations (replacement). And the garbage becomes language from the anonymous to the specific, from the functional to the dysfunctional throwaway to the transformed object of the poem.

There is a conspiracy between transformation, alteration and use. A fast metaphor for sending this package into the direction of a sculpture. Homemade status is the privacy that transforms the private public objects into individual messages and the process that they use is ritual. The rustic juxtaposition elevated to the status of icon for this theater of the visual. The intention of this exhibition is a dialogue among a group of artists that shares this transgressions of beauty, when accumulations of memories, mutilations of fantasies illustrated by the common significant object that collides and penetrates at the same time. This frame of mind is the story of the exhibition. The exhibition then is a form of storytelling. Used objects are discarded memories in a disposable society. Their reuse is a commentary on survival. It reinforces our attitude about the practicality of use and reaffirms our instinct of preservation.

The use of the object is put in a still life frame. It is changed into a landscape, into a stage, into a narrative of the object by collision. The melancholy of the object becomes the story of a subject, a story of assembling, decomposing and stretching the ideas of the material. The penetration of all this, the whole package, the unit, is sent in the direction of a sculpture.

The current global tendency of rehabilitation and reuse - the recycling of found materials, the recontextualization of industrial products - as an attitude of recuperating memories by reflecting the social, economic and political crisis. This historical moment is marking a crisis, and from that crisis comes a reconstruction and the objects in the exhibition reflect this "aesthetics of necessity" - the impulse of the artist to reconstruct the whole planet as a unit is reconstructing its disposals recycling of reuse of works in the exhibition will reflect with an approach towards aesthetics that mark a dialogue of rehabilitation between the artists and the society that produce them.

No country is independent or individual anymore
Dependability as an aesthetic issue.

Poverty Pop is a definition of a body of work that we have encountered in artist studios over the last few years. Poverty Pop is a group exhibition of artists who make work from found materials. Out of economic necessity, a generation of artists are recycling found objects and transforming this refuse into visual metaphors. The work reflects the economic times that we are living in and demonstrates the artists' ingenuity to make art from discarded products. Poverty Pop is about urban folklorism.

Although this concept has its origins going back to Marcel Duchamp and the artistic movements of Dada, Surrealism, and Pop Art, Poverty Pop traces an impulse that is influenced on one side by economic necessity and on another a growing concern for the environment. Each successive generation differs in their aesthetic relationship toward industrial waste, and each has motivations which are rooted in a specific time, political, artistic, and economic reality. Finding a poetic version of the used object, the artist reveals a different connotation of personal memory, history and a shared popular culture of manufactured commodities.

In Poverty Pop found objects become recuperated metaphors. The object's original function is dead only to become alive in reuse. The artist transforms the anonymous to the specific. The found object contains a value of time and labor production relating to its past history and to its current manifestation. Each work in the exhibition involves a transformation of creative energy rather than mechanized power. The artist transforms the labor of production into an ingenious process which resists mass production and creates an intellectual time.

Text for the exhibition at Exit Art NY
POVERTY POP: THE AESTHETICS OF NECESSITY
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