

Too Fast to Live, Too Young to Die: Punk Graphics, 1976–1986

teachers'
resource
packet



museum of arts and design

welcome

Thank you for your interest in visiting the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) and the current exhibition *Too Fast to Live, Too Young to Die: Punk Graphics, 1976–1986*.

During a MADlab school visit, Artist Educators facilitate engaging discussions around selected works in our current exhibitions that prompt students to think about the aesthetic, psychological, and activist dimensions of art and design and serve as inspiration for their own creative expression. The studio portion of MADlab focuses on experimenting with different materials and processes, and as students create their own artworks based on concepts discussed in the galleries.

Moreover, each school group has the opportunity to interact with residents in MAD's Artist Studios program and witness a diversity of creative processes in an open studio setting. MAD encourages students to take advantage of its full range of offerings as a cultural resource in the heart of New York City and, in doing so, seeks to foster a sense of ownership and belonging in young people. Each visiting student receives a family pass so they can return to the Museum and share their insights and discoveries with parents, other relatives, and friends.

For educators planning to bring their students to MAD, this resource packet can be used for pre- and post-visit experiences at your discretion. For those who cannot visit the Museum, the packet can nonetheless be used to guide discussions about craft and creative expression in the twenty-first century.

At MAD we believe that educators excel in determining the content and activities best suited to their students. We encourage invite you to decide which materials are developmentally appropriate for the young people you work with. We invite you, and to exercise your creativity and skill in adapting these materials to best serve the unique needs of your group.

We look forward to inspiring conversation, dialogue, and discovery!

Sincerely,

The MAD Education Department

introduction

More than forty years after punk exploded into the music scenes of New York and London, its impact on the larger culture continues to resonate. Born in a period of economic malaise, punk was a reaction, in part, to an increasingly formulaic rock music industry. Punk's energy coalesced into a powerful subcultural phenomenon that transcended music to affect other fields, such as visual art, fashion, and graphic design.

This exhibition explores the unique visual language of punk as it evolved in the United States and the United Kingdom through hundreds of its most memorable graphics—flyers, posters, album covers, promotions, and zines. Drawn predominantly from the extensive collection of Andrew Krivine, *Too Fast to Live, Too Young to Die: Punk Graphics, 1976–1986* reveals punk to constitute a range of diverse approaches and eclectic styles that resist reduction to stereotypes.

Arranged not by artist but rather by theme, the exhibition crisscrosses punk history to explore various visual strategies and design techniques, including the role of appropriated, or borrowed, images; the use of collage and montage; and the do-it-yourself creation of flyers and zines. It also examines ways in which comics, the horror genre, and modern art influenced the design of punk graphics. Spanning a decade of punk and post-punk genres, the exhibition moves from the sobriety of a stripped-down minimalism to the expansive color palettes and expressive forms of new wave.

Punk graphics reflected postmodern art practices of the time: designers raided popular culture, scavenged history, subverted messages, and transgressed aesthetic rules. Many designs embraced irreverence through humor, satire, and parody, while reflecting the energy and spontaneity of the music through equally spirited and experimental visual elements. Punk fed the alternative music scene that would emerge in the 1990s, as well as today's DIY and pro-am cultures, which blur the lines between professionals and amateurs. Punk's transgressive spirit emboldened people from all walks of life to reimagine themselves as creative agents and active participants in a culture driven by music, art, and design.

Too Fast to Live, Too Young to Die: Punk Graphics, 1976–1986 is organized by Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and curated by Andrew Blauvelt, Director, with the assistance of Steffi Duarte and Andrew Krivine.

Unless otherwise noted, all objects in this exhibition are courtesy Andrew Krivine. The Museum of Arts and Design is extremely grateful for his support of this exhibition.

The exhibition is sponsored in part by Dr. Martens with the support of Marian and Russell Burke, Michael and Patti Dweck, the Paulsen Family Foundation, and Flora Major for the Kutya Major Foundation.

#PunkGraphics • @MADmuseum

how does a museum work?

The **Museum of Arts and Design** has been functioning as an international resource center for craft, arts, and design since 1956. Through its collections, exhibitions, programs, and publications, the Museum serves as a forum for critical debate concerning the nature of craftsmanship and the engagement with process that links materials, techniques, forms, patterns, and concepts in all creative work.

ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This team, led by the Director of the Museum, determines the institution's programs, plans, and philosophy. It also raises funds to realize the Museum's goals and works directly with the Board of Trustees, which guides the Museum's functions.

CURATORIAL

Led by the Chief Curator, this is the team that decides which exhibitions will be shown, what artwork is to be included, and how the exhibitions are to be interpreted. In addition to researching and writing content, this team makes galleries look inviting to visitors and determines how to best showcase the objects.

REGISTRATION

Led by the Director of Collections, this team arranges for the safe packing, shipping, and handling of art to be placed in an exhibition and maintains the permanent collections acquired by the Museum.

EXHIBITIONS

The exhibitions team designs the way an exhibition is going to look and oversees the installation of pedestals, vitrines, wall labels, and other features.

EDUCATION

This team provides the interactive interpretation of the objects on view by designing educational programs for children, adults, and families who visit the Museum.

how does a museum work?

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing and communications staff define the image of the Museum both on site and online. They oversee the content and design of the website and issue press releases and marketing materials. They also build and maintain relationships with the press.

VISITOR SERVICES

The visitor services team is at the front line of every museum. They greet visitors at the admissions desk and help them to get oriented to the layout and exhibitions.

DOCENTS

The docent team gives tours of the exhibitions to engage and educate visitors.

FACILITIES

This is the team that facilitates the day-to-day operations of the Museum, from the lights being turned on to ensuring the safety of all who enter the building.

SECURITY

This is the team most often seen in a museum. Its main task is to protect the artwork from harm so that visitors in the future will be able to see the same objects on view today.

Museums are places where we can learn about the past, present, and future of the world around us. There are endless opportunities to diversify knowledge when the habit of museum exploration begins at an early age. We look forward to welcoming your group into our galleries.

helpful hints for your visit

While visiting the exhibition, try to use all your senses. Notice the way the pieces are displayed. Can you distinguish any specific groupings of pieces? If you enjoy looking at one piece more than others, can you explain why?

Here are some questions and suggestions to think about as you move around the exhibition:

WHAT CAN BE OBJECTIVELY OBSERVED?

- What is the physical description? Size, scale, materials used, articulation of materials...
- What iconography, if any, is used? Designs, words, diagrams...
- What are the object's formal design characteristics? Lines, shapes, forms, color, texture...

WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE TO INTERACT WITH THIS PIECE OF ART? HOW WOULD YOU HANDLE, LIFT, DISPLAY IT?

- How might the piece of art feel if you touched it?
- What might the object do? Does the piece have a function? Consider and explain.
- If the artwork could talk, what might it say?

WHAT MIGHT BE IN THE MIND OF THE ARTIST?

- What is your emotional response to this artwork? Fear, joy, indifference, curiosity, revulsion, excitement...

helpful hints for your visit



HOW DOES THE WORK CONNECT WITH THE WORLD AROUND US?

- Does the artwork tell a story? Does the piece have underlying political or social meaning? (Understanding and visual thinking)
- Develop a strategy to investigate your questions through looking or further research.
- Review all of the above information and consider what was going on in the world when the work was produced to develop possible interpretations of the piece. (Theories and hypotheses)

copy and paste: the appropriated image



The visual strategy of **appropriation**, the act of borrowing preexisting images, became an emblematic trope of contemporary art in the late 1970s and 1980s. ... These cheap, commonplace sources allowed for easy access, not just for artists, but also for the myriad designers of punk graphics.

Above:
Jamie Reid
God Save The Queen
Sex Pistols, 45 poster
1977

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition catalogue

copy and paste: the appropriated image

WHAT IS IN THE MIND OF THE ARTIST? HOW DOES THE WORK CONNECT WITH THE WORLD AROUND US?

Many of punk's most memorable designs employ the visual strategy of appropriation, drawing imagery from mass media sources such as newspapers, books, television, and film. A particularly modern technique, appropriation is associated with various twentieth-century art movements, such as **Dada** and **Surrealism**, as well as with the contemporary visual art of the punk era. Jamie Reid, who created many iconic punk designs for the band the Sex Pistols, was drawn to this history of visual language as **parody** and protest.

look

Take a close look at the work depicted on the previous page, and describe it in as much detail as possible:

- Look at the poster and describe it in as much detail as possible. Have you seen this picture before?
- Describe the qualities of each of the two images (the flag and the portrait) How are they different from one another? How do the lines in the flag relate to the portrait?
- Why would the artist combine the picture of the Queen and the flag of the United Kingdom?
- How do you think this work was made? Keep in mind that this was before Photoshop or other digital design technologies.
- Have you ever made a flyer, a party invite, or a card by combining materials by hand (e.g., cutting, ripping, and gluing or taping things together), not using a computer?

The crowned figure in this Sex Pistols poster is Queen Elizabeth II of England, who would have been instantly recognizable to everyone seeing the picture, even with her eyes and mouth blacked out. The currency of the United Kingdom features a similar picture of the Queen.

copy and paste: the appropriated image

explore

The picture of the Queen used on the poster was the official portrait for her Silver Jubilee, the twenty-fifth anniversary of her accession to the throne. Throughout 1977, the anniversary was celebrated with large-scale parties and parades throughout the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth.



- With this in mind, how are Jamie Reid and the Sex Pistols positioning themselves against Queen Elizabeth II specifically, or the monarchy in general? Do you think this poster is disrespectful?
- What are some possible attitudes toward the existence of a queen in the late twentieth century?
- What does the covering of a person's eyes and mouth in a photo suggest to you?
- What is a ransom note? Who uses ransom notes, and why? Are they usually signed?
- How would you envision an updated version of this poster relating to the time and place in which you live?

discuss

In an online interview, Jamie Reid, the designer of this poster, gives his advice for young creatives. His suggestions include: destroy your computer, pick up a paintbrush, have a sense of humor, learn from the past, and look to the future:

Radical ideas will always get appropriated by the mainstream. A lot of it is to do with the fact that the establishment and the people in authority actually lack the ability to be creative. They rob everything they can. ... That's why you have to keep moving on to new things. ... You always have to move on, and move on, and move on. ¹

¹ Paul Moody, "Iconic Punk Artist Jamie Reid Has Some Advice for Young Creatives," AnotherMan, October 25, 2018, accessed April 9, 2019, <http://www.anothermanmag.com/life-culture/10568/iconic-punk-artist-jamie-reid-has-some-advice-for-young-creatives>.

copy and paste: the appropriated image

- Discuss this quote, considering the fact that this poster was designed years before the existence of Photoshop or other now-common digital design tools.
- Does this design still convey an outsider view or a protest of the mainstream?

activity: dig into lyrics

Even the title of the Sex Pistols song is appropriated: it is also the title of the British national anthem, "God Save the Queen."

1. Have students read the lyrics of the Sex Pistols song (provided below), and pick the line or two that they think is the most important or relevant to this poster design.
2. Have them share their choices, along with their reasoning, in small groups.

"God Save the Queen" by the Sex Pistols

*God save the queen
The fascist regime
They made you a moron
A potential H bomb*

*God save the queen
She's not a human being
and there's no future
And England's dreaming*

*Don't be told what you want
Don't be told what you need
There's no future
No future
No future for you*

*God save the queen
We mean it man
We love our queen
God saves*

*God save the queen
'Cause tourists are money
And our figurehead
Is not what she seems*

*Oh God save history
God save your mad parade
Oh Lord God have mercy
All crimes are paid*

*Oh when there's no future
How can there be sin
We're the flowers
In the dustbin
We're the poison
In your human machine
We're the future
Your future*

*God save the queen
We mean it man
We love our queen
God saves
God save the queen
We mean it man
There's no future
In England's dreaming God
save the queen*

*No future
No future
No future for you*

*No future
No future
No future for me*

*No future
No future
No future for you*

copy and paste: the appropriated image



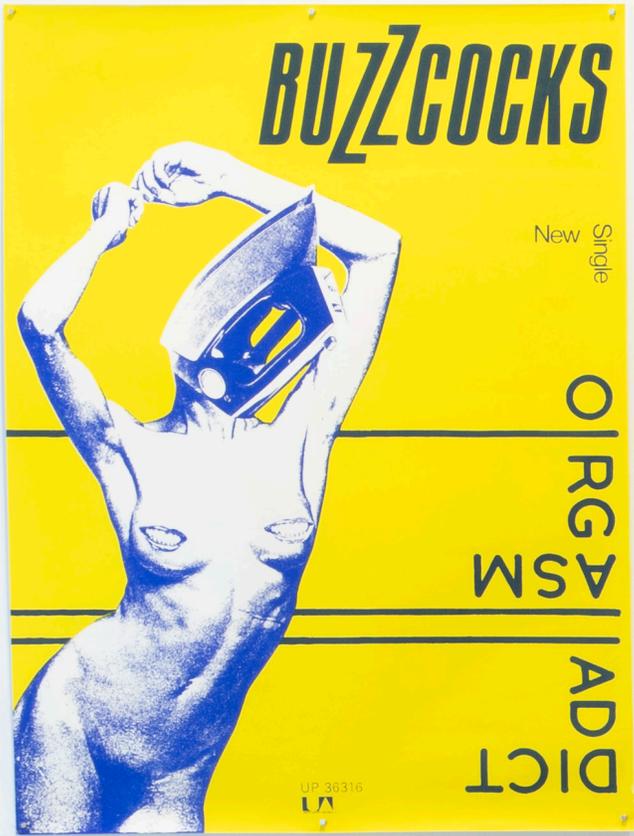
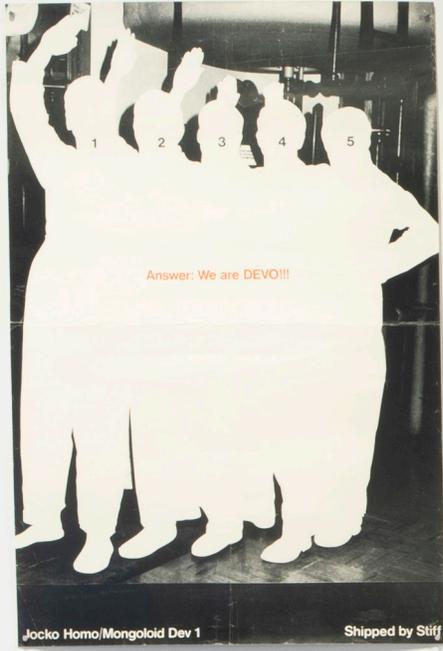
activity: where are you going?

Appropriation had a history well before the development of punk graphics. In another design for the Sex Pistols, Jamie Reid changed the destination signs on a xeroxed image of two buses, to read "Nowhere" and "Boredom." In doing so, Reid used a particular appropriation technique called **détournement**, in which preexisting elements take on new meaning through placement in a new context.

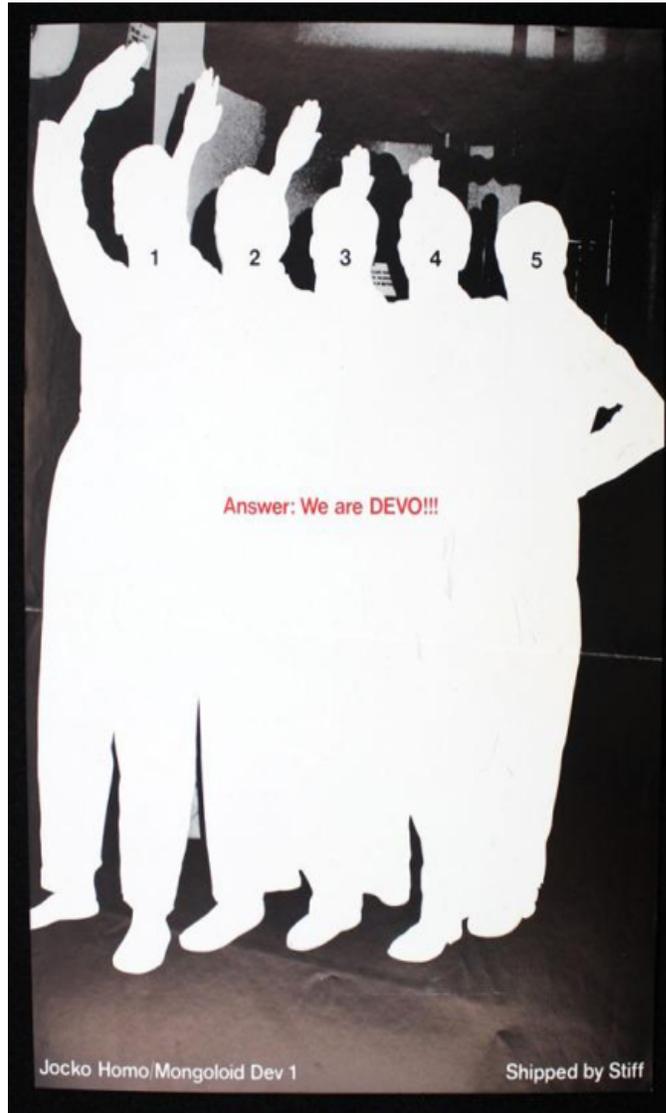
1. Use the bus image below to create your own graphic, by cutting and gluing or taping your own choice of words onto the picture. Do this by hand, without using a computer.
2. Use a current newspaper to find text and/or images to add to your piece. You can also add text using stencils or hand lettering.
3. Describe the people who will ride on your bus: you, people from your generation, or another group?

copy and paste: the appropriated image





cut and paste: collage and bricolage



Punk graphics are a “cut and paste” culture, whereby fragments of texts and images are found, assembled, and transformed into a new work. Armed with scissors and paste, punk designers scavenged whatever books, magazines, and newspapers were at hand, searching for new source material.

Above:
Designer unknown, *Jocko
Homo / Mongoloid*,
Devo, 45 poster, 1978

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition wall text

JAMMING!

№ 111

THE SHOUT



ANOTHER PRETTY FACE
ADAM & THE ANTS
BUZZCOCKS

DAMNED • SECTOR 27 • THE FALL
SPEC RECORDS

JAM

Swiss-
Brum
Pages



DEAD KENNEDYS

FANZINES



THE BEAT



zeitgeist

25P

do it yourself: zines and flyers



The design of zines and flyers is predicated on an exalted notion of the **amateur**. Derived from its Latin root *amator*, meaning “lover,” the word is connected to the notion of love and passion, rather than skill or mastery. In much punk music and many punk graphics, the amateur reigns supreme. In fact, an inverse condition of “deskilling”—unlearning or actively suppressing certain professional skills, both musical and graphical—was sometimes necessary in order to enter the scene. For homeschooled punks such unlearning was unnecessary; for the professionally trained, however, it often meant breaking the rules after first learning them.

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition catalogue

Defining themselves against a society predicated on consumption, zinesters privilege the ethic of DIY, do-it-yourself: make your own culture and stop consuming that which is made for you.²

—Stephen Duncombe

Above:
Robin Richards, cover,
Jamming! 11,
January 1981

² Stephen Duncombe, *Notes from Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture* (Portland: Microcosm Publishing, 2017).

do it yourself: zines and flyers

look

Take a close look at the graphic above. Have students share their observations, writing them down as you go around the room.

- At first glance, what does this graphic look like to you?
- How is it structured or subdivided?
- What sorts of smaller pictures make up the overall **composition**?
- What is the relationship between text and image in the graphic?
- What might have been the function of this work of graphic art?
- In what context would you expect to see something like this?

explore

Zines were the literary and graphic expression of punk music. This cover is from a popular fanzine started in 1977 by Tony Fletcher, a thirteen-year-old boy inspired by London punk rock. The first issue was printed on a school copier, with only fifty copies made. This cover is from issue 11. (For a history of the zine's covers and distribution, see the Jamming! website at <http://www.ijamming.net/Jammingmagazine/Jamming!Magazine.html>).

*I was no longer fitting in at school. I was unsure of my friends, and they were increasingly unsure of me. I wanted to be a rock star. But while all around, voices were starting to break, acne beginning to appear, facial hair sprouting, I remained all flabby flesh and innate scruff, with a high-pitched whine and not a muscle to my name. I was the runt of the class and rarely allowed to forget it. I had no father at home to help me out, and could hardly talk to my mum. So I took solace in The Jam.*³

³ Tony Fletcher, *Boy about Town* (London: Heinemann, 2013).

do it yourself: zines and flyers

discuss

An amateur is a person who engages in a pursuit, study, science, or sport as a pastime rather than as a profession, and who lacks experience and competence in that field. Have the class share words that they associate with “amateur” and list them in two columns: one for positive associations (e.g., passionate; authentic; not formulaic; commercial; done for love, not money) and the other for negative associations (e.g., not competent; not professional).

Discuss these different associations and ask students which they most identify with. How do you feel about doing something you don’t know how to do?

If desired, look at the history of *Jamming!* and discuss how it changed over time, as it became more polished.

activity: make a zine

Following the instructions below, have students make a zine of their own using a single piece of paper. The zine could celebrate a musical artist or another person or thing that students are fans of. Have them use DIY strategies like cutting, gluing, using stencils, and handwriting to create zines by hand. Students can work together or make individual projects.

1.
FOLD INTO
EIGHTHS
(DOTTED LINES)

CUT ON
SOLID LINE

2.
UNFOLD
THEN FOLD
IN HALF

THE LONG WAY

3.
PINCH
FROM MIDDLE

4.
FOLD



Wreckless Eric



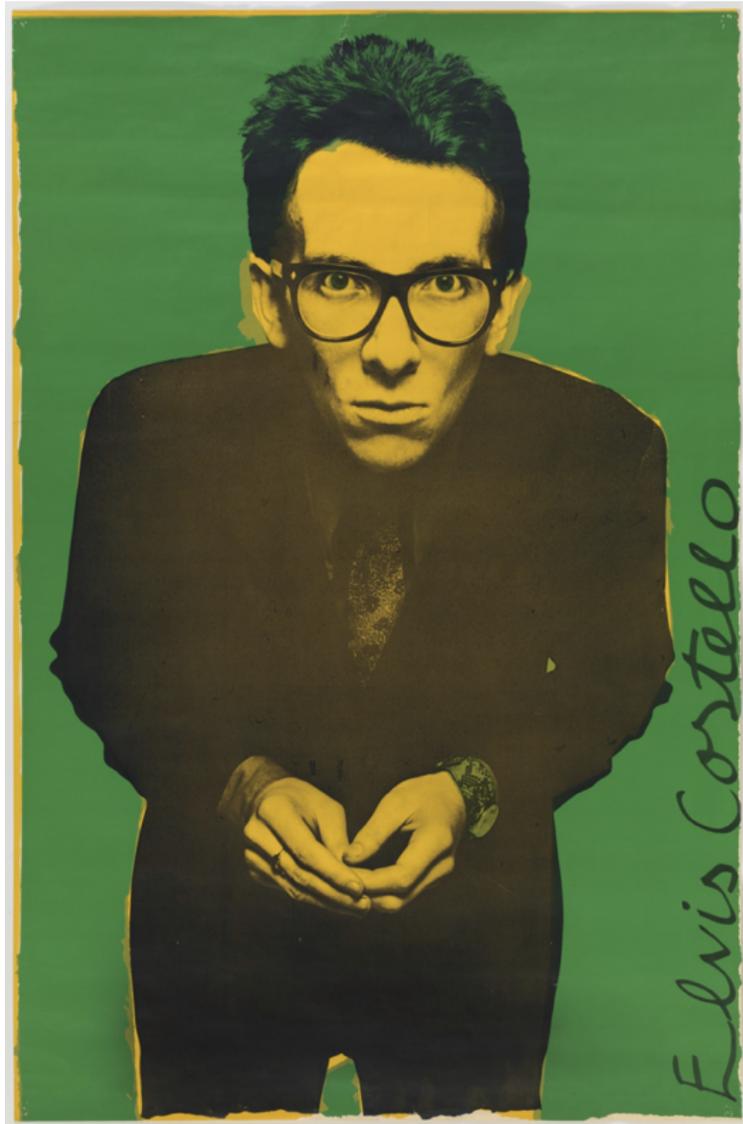
Nick Lowe



Larry Wallis



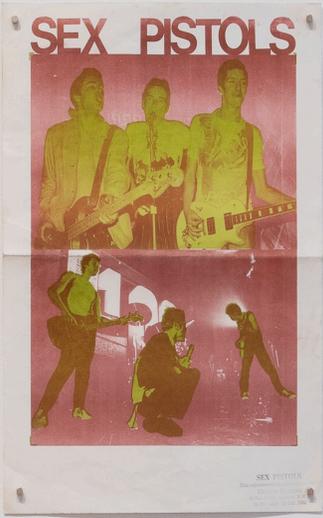
for art's sake



There was a reciprocal relationship between the art world and the punk music scene, especially in New York and London. The styles of **avant-garde** art movements of the early twentieth century ... were resurrected by punk designers. **Pop art**, and Andy Warhol in particular, was another major influence.

Above:
Barney Bubbles
(designer) and Chris
Gabin (photographer),
Elvis Costello,
Live Stiffs tour poster,
1977

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition wall text

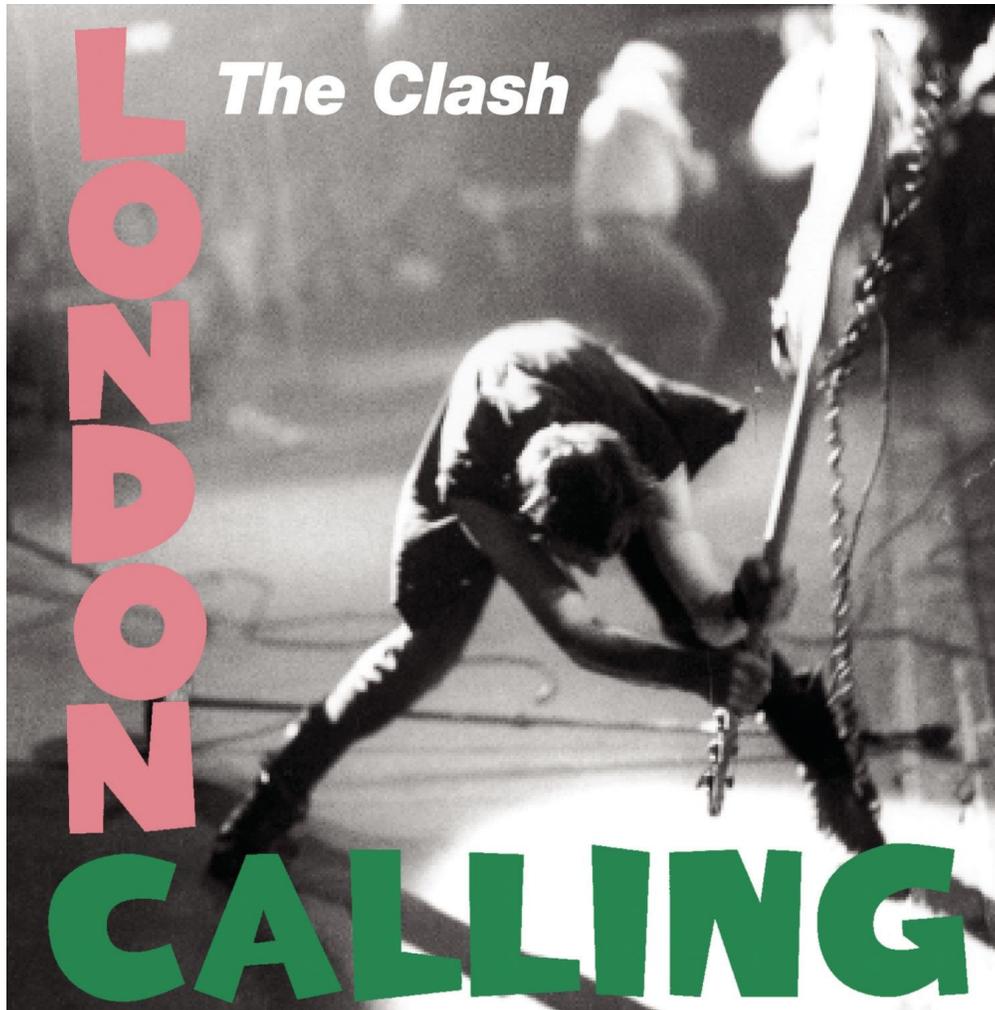


Ray Lowry (designer) and Pennie Smith (photographer)
 The Clash, London Calling, 1979
 Poster, ink on paper
 © 1979 Atlantic Records

In one of the most iconic images in rock music, photographer Pennie Smith captured Clash bassist Paul Simonon smashing his guitar against the stage during a concert at the Palladium in New York City in 1979. The pink and green typography that frames the image mimics the cover of Elvis Presley's 1956 eponymous debut album. Beyond these strong visual elements, the promotional poster owes much to Andy Warhol and his use of repetition: the horizontal strip-and-repeat of the design creates a still animation effect, while also alluding to Warhol's own series of Elvis canvases, which range from a single emblematic pose to multiple repeat images of the singer.



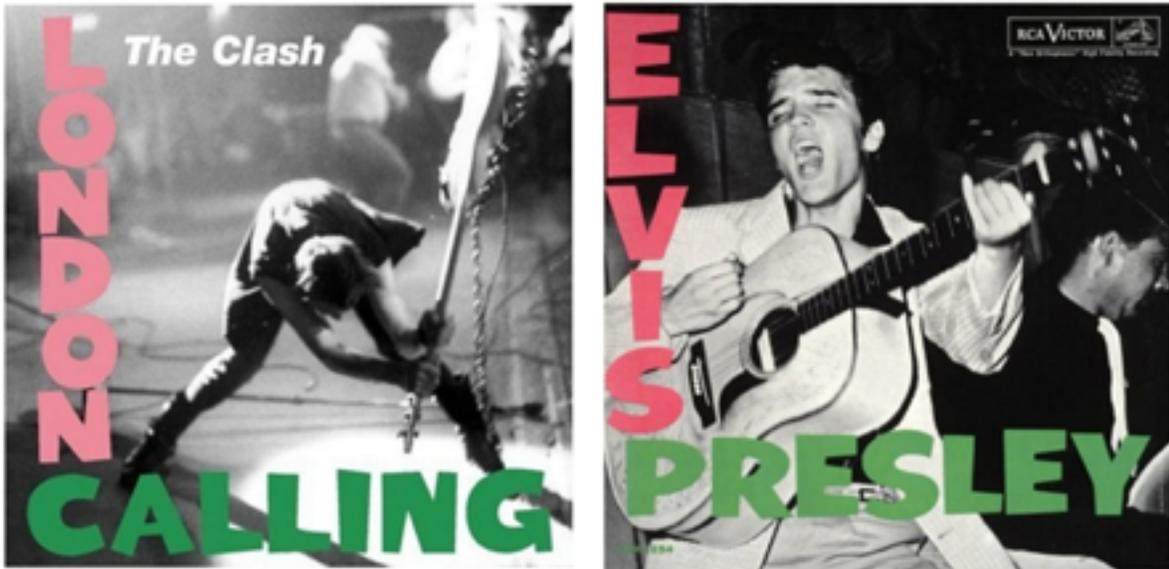
pastiche



The poster for the Clash's *London Calling* features the famous photograph taken by Pennie Smith of Clash bassist Paul Simonon smashing his guitar against the stage, repeated twenty-eight times. The single image, which appears on the album cover, has been hailed as perhaps the most iconic of the rock era, capturing the uncontrollable nature and frenzied energy of punk's live performance.

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition catalogue

pastiche



look

Take a close look at the two pictures above.

- Make a list of all the things the two pictures have in common (keep going even if you think nothing else will come to mind).
- What differences do you notice?
- Based on the poster designs and the photographs the designers selected, what assumptions can you make about the music of Elvis Presley and the band the Clash?

discuss

The cover of the 1979 Clash album *London Calling* mimics the lettering and design of Elvis Presley's debut album of 1956. This is an example of **pastiche**, an artistic work made in a style that imitates that of another work, artist, or period.

- Why do you think the designer chose to imitate an album cover from decades prior?

pastiche



Ray Lowry (designer) and Pennie Smith (photographer), *London Calling*, The Clash, poster, 1979

Look at the poster for *London Calling*, above, considering how it adds to the design of the album cover.

- How does the repetition of the photograph contribute to the energy of this design?
- Do you see movement in this poster, or does it seem still? What about it (color, shapes, etc.) makes it seem that way?
- If this poster were a greeting, what would the greeting be? How loud? Shy or aggressive?

agitprop: power to the people



A blend of the words “agitation” and “propaganda,” **agitprop** describes official forms of persuasion used by governments, particularly Communist regimes, to influence their citizenry. The post-punk era of the 1980s began to identify with particular progressive social and political causes, in reaction to the policies of US President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Punk musicians lent their support to a variety of issues, including the concerns of striking workers and political prisoners, and social justice causes, such as gay rights, the anti-apartheid movement, and efforts like Rock Against Racism.

Above:
Winston Smith, *Bedtime
for Democracy*, Dead
Kennedys, LP poster,
1986

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition wall text

agitprop: power to the people

look

- What is going on in this picture?
- Which image elements do you find your eye drawn to?
- If you could come up with your own title for the picture, what would it be?
- Why do you think the artist chose the headline “Bedtime for Democracy”?

The figure in this poster is Ronald Reagan, who served as the fortieth President of the United States from 1981 to 1989. During this time, Margaret Thatcher was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Both leaders were known for their conservative policies, prompting many post-punk artists to take a highly critical stance.

explore

Prior to going into politics, Ronald Reagan was a Hollywood actor. The picture of Reagan used in this **collage** is likely a film still from his acting career.

- Does the picture remind you of anything?
- What is the situation into which the figure of Reagan has been placed?
- What questions do you have about it?
- Numerous punk songs mentioned Reagan (see online resources). Do you know of any current songs about world leaders or other political issues?

discuss

Designer Winston Smith created artwork for one of the most political punk bands, the Dead Kennedys. He named himself after the protagonist of George Orwell’s novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In the novel, Winston Smith is a clerk at the Ministry of Truth, where he works on rewriting history books to appear in line with the current government’s portrayal of historical events.

agitprop: power to the people

If your students have read *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, discuss the novel's relevance to today's political climate.

- What effect does it have when government officials regularly include demonstrable falsehoods as part of their official communications?
- Which is more powerful, control over information or physical control over people? In what sense are they the same?



Gee Vaucher, Christ – *The Album / Well Forked...But Not Dead*, Crass, LP poster, 1982

The designer of this poster, Gee Vaucher, was a member of Crass, an English art collective and punk band that promoted political ideology and advocated for animal rights, direct action, antifascism, and environmentalism.

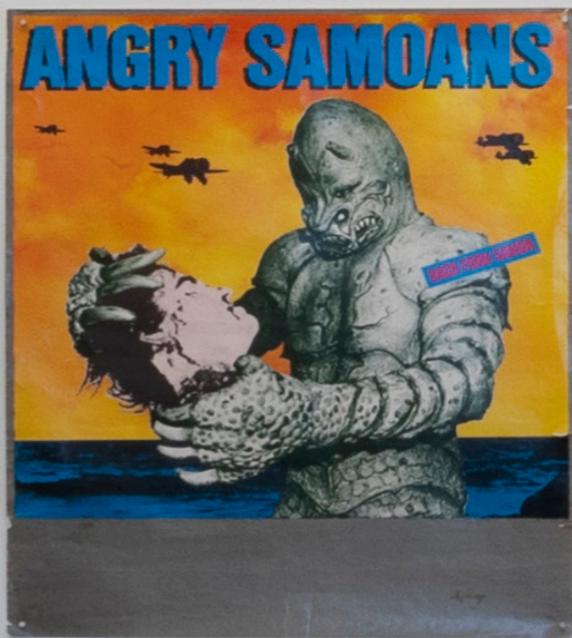
- Describe this picture in as much detail as possible.
- Where do you think the original photos are from? What is the effect of putting so many different pictures together?
- What do you take the text to mean?

“An institution is the lengthened shadow of one person” is a quote from “Self-Reliance,” an essay by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

- Research that piece of writing and see if it changes your understanding of the quote.

activity: perspective taking

Have students write an account of what is going on in this artwork from the point of view of one of the figures pictured.



SCARY MONSTERS & SUPER CREEPS

Placing themselves, as Patti Smith once sang, "outside of society," punks were social misfits and cultural outcasts, self-described freaks and outliers. To underscore this position, punk frequently used various shock tactics to confront its audience of fans and passersby: wearing spiked leather clothing or bondage gear; piercing their clothes and skin with safety pins; spiking, shaving, or dyeing their hair in vibrant colors; and applying exaggerated makeup to their faces. Through these acts, artifice was made conspicuous. Some genres of post punk music embraced elements of horror, the occult, and science fiction. In these graphics, Godzilla-like creatures threaten civilization as the spectre of nuclear Armageddon is invoked. Just like the Dada artists after World War I, the horrors of modern warfare are deployed as anti-militaristic warnings. Goth punk adopted the look of the living dead in its fascination with zombies and vampires. Even seemingly normal and everyday things such as dolls and clowns took on new creepy associations through their uncanny human like appearances.



scary monsters and super creeps



Placing themselves, as Patti Smith sang, “outside of society,” punks identify as outlaws—beyond society’s mores and laws—and freaks—cultural outliers and cast-offs. As scavengers, punks pirated looks from other periods, hijacked symbols from everyday life, and looted the musical treasure of other cultures. Given the creative violence in which punk engaged, and its need to shock the public, it seems natural that some genres of post-punk embraced elements of horror, the occult, and science fiction as they explored new sonic territories.

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition catalogue

Above:
Ronn Spencer, *Back from Samoa, Angry Samoans*,
LP poster, 1982

scary monsters and super creeps

look

Look at the cover of the Angry Samoans' fourteen-song, seventeen-minute hardcore album, *Back from Samoa*.

- What's going on in this picture? Describe as many details as possible.
- What does it remind you of? What makes this artwork look real or unreal?
- What might you hear if you could turn on the sound for this image?
- Where might the artist have found inspiration for his work?
- What message does this album cover send to music consumers?

activity: drawing dissonant sound

Materials:

- Paper
- Drawing materials (pencils, markers, oil pastels, ink, or charcoal)

1. Find the song "Time Has Come Today" (2 min., 20 sec., from the album *Back from Samoa*) online, and play it for the class. Have students listen to the song for thirty seconds before choosing materials and starting to draw.
2. Encourage students to think about the texture of this music, the speed, the distorted guitars. There is no wrong way to interpret the sounds. Some students may draw abstract shapes or patterns, while others may choose to draw representational forms.
3. When the song ends, encourage students to share what they drew and talk about their creative decisions. Reflect on the process of working to music, and discuss the ways that the drawings reflect the sounds of the song.

scary monsters and super creeps

activity: DIY soundscape

Some punk bands experimented with sonic dissonance by using handmade instruments and household objects, such as blenders or vacuum cleaners. Using only newspapers and other classroom objects (besides phones and computers), have students make sounds to create first a dissonant soundscape, and then a harmonious one.

Materials:

- Newspaper pages
- Classroom objects (optional)
- Percussion instruments (optional)

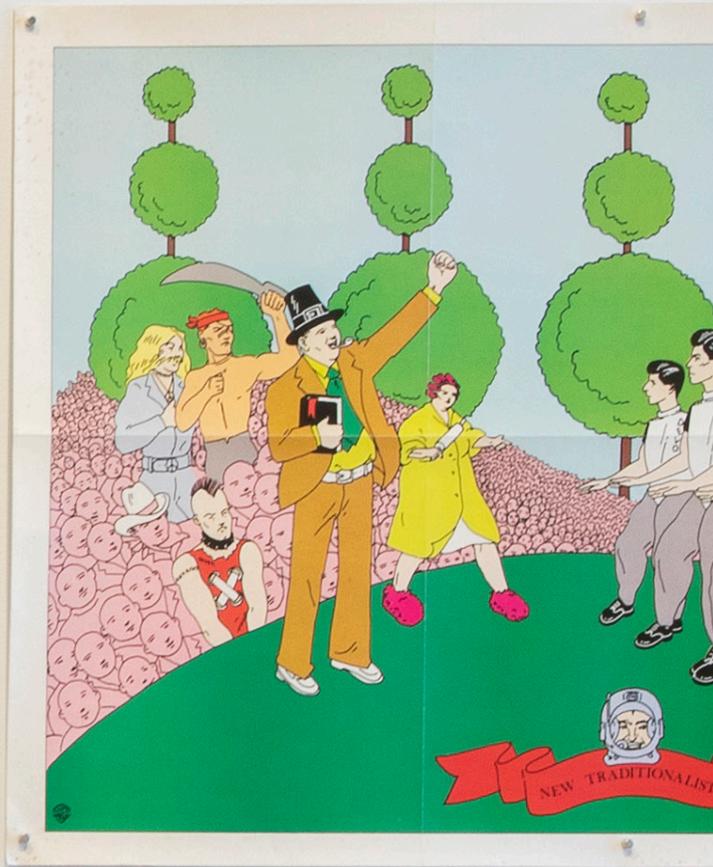
1. Give each student a newspaper or section of newspaper pages.
2. Break students into small groups, and have each group invent as many different sound effects as they can using the newspaper (e.g., rustling or ripping the pages; rolling it to use as a percussion stick or even a megaphone). If you like, you can invite them to incorporate objects from around the classroom (e.g., fanning the pages of a textbook) or percussion instruments that you have available.
3. After experimenting, groups decide how to combine their sounds into a dissonant soundscape composition and then a harmonious soundscape composition. Encourage them to think about how they will coordinate the sounds to create their soundscape. When will they introduce new sounds? How loud/quiet will it be? What rhythms will they use? Will they use repetition?
4. Each group shares their soundscape compositions with the class.

STIFF RECORDS

DEC. 17, 18, 19 & 20

NEW YORK'S **BOTTOM-LINE**

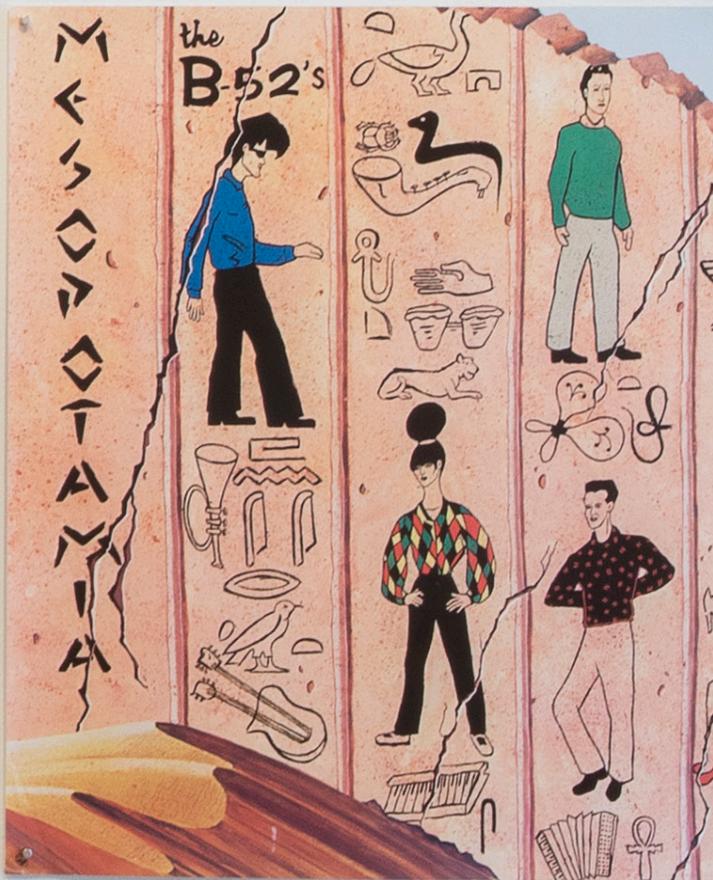
FEATURING WRECKLESS ERIC · MICKEY RIPP · JONAH LEWIE · LENE LOVICH · RACHEL SWEET



BLUE ORCHIDS
AGENTS OF CHANGE

THAT IS WHAT I WANT.

EP EP EP EP EP



comic relief



Punk has been characterized as a **nihilistic** movement, deeply skeptical about social institutions and equally cynical about life. However, the often somber and serious attitude of punk belies a great deal of dark humor, wit, and sarcasm that pervaded the scene. Comics and comix (adult-themed serials that emerged in the 1960s) provided inspiration and fodder for many designers of punk graphics.

Above:
Designer unknown,
New Traditionalists,
Devo, LP poster (second
design), 1989

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition wall text

comic relief

look

- What sort of comic or cartoon does this poster seem to be imitating?
- What stands out the most on first look?
- As you keep looking, what else seems important?
- Who is the most important figure, and what makes you think so?
- What doesn't make sense about this picture?
- Can you find similarities and differences between this poster and the 1978 Devo poster featured on page 17?

writing: thought bubbles

Have students write out, using complete sentences, what one of these characters might be thinking or saying. Ask them to describe the visual evidence that supports their assumptions.



comic relief

activity: tableau game

Short for “tableau vivant,” or “living picture,” a **tableau** is a frozen, silent scene meant to tell a story visually. Tableaux are often used in theater. You can make a game out of re-creating a picture to tell a story without movement or sound.

1. Divide the class into groups and determine which student in each group will be the “director.” Give each director a copy of the picture above.
2. Groups have three minutes to replicate the scene. With so many figures in this picture, the director will have to decide which to include. Only the director can look at the printout; he or she directs the members verbally or through physically demonstrating. Have students focus on details such as facial expressions, postures, positioning of hands and fingers, and facing in the correct direction.
3. After three minutes, walk around to each group and observe their attention to detail. You can take digital photos of each tableau in order to show the groups what they actually looked like.

GOD Save



eccentric alphabets: punk typography



Above:
Julia Gorton, *Orphans,
Teenage Jesus and the
Jerks*, 45 poster, 1978

Punk posters reflected the do-it-yourself style of typography found in zines and flyers, such as hand-drawn lettering, ransom note-style typography, and typewritten text, often greatly enlarged. The rules of typography as they had evolved over centuries were rethought and consciously broken. Uneven baselines, dimensional typography, and cock-eyed, upside-down, and backwards letters reflected a much more experimental attitude. Punk graphics altered the course of graphic design by blurring the lines between professional and amateur work. If punk music exalted the amateurs and their unschooled talents, then the professional or trained typography of post-punk designers would have to be unlearned, or “deskilled.”

—Andrew Blauvelt, exhibition wall text

eccentric alphabets: punk typography

look

Take a look at the image above.

- Describe the figure in the image, including attire, makeup, posture, and facial expression.
- What design techniques did the artist use here? Think about composition, color, contrast, balance, rhythm, etc.
- What do you think is the purpose of the image?
- What is the relationship between image and text?
- How would you describe the overall feel, or vibe, of this poster?

Julia Gorton is known for her stark, candid, black-and-white photos of musicians and others in New York’s downtown punk scene. In this poster, she combined one of her photographs with classic cut-out punk typography. Her work from the past era has received new recognition thanks to her recently launched [Instagram account](#). In a 2017 interview with *Garage*, Gorton recalled the creative energy of the era: “You didn’t need to be perfect before you started. I think that is why people react on such an emotional level to much of the music and art of that time.”⁴

activity: no rules text work

Materials

- Printouts of the word pages (2) that follow this activity description
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers
- Newspapers and magazines (optional)
- Letter stencils and/or letter stamps (optional)

4 Christina Cacouris, “A 70s Photographer Unveils the Ultimate New York Punk Archive on Instagram,” *Garage*, November 13, 2017, accessed April 9, 2019, https://garage.vice.com/en_us/article/evbke4/julia-gorton-cbgb-television-blondie-devo.

eccentric alphabets: punk typography

1. Give each student a copy of the word pages.
2. Have students look through newspapers or on computers or phones to find a headline or selection of text.
3. Pass out scissors, glue sticks, and markers.
4. Pass out optional materials such as newspapers, magazines, and stencils or letter stamps, if using.
5. Have students alter the text they selected by adding and subtracting letters and by changing the scale or wording. Encourage students to experiment with how much they can break with conventions (e.g., consistently sized type, straight lines, right-side-up text) and still retain legibility.



glossary

AGITPROP

The term originated in Soviet Russia as a shortened name for the Department for Agitation and Propaganda, which created cultural content to explain the policies of the Communist Party and to persuade the general public to share its values and goals. It has come to describe any kind of highly politicized art.

AMATEUR

One who engages in a pursuit, study, science, or sport as a pastime rather than as a profession; one lacking in experience and competence in an art or science. From the French *amateur*, which in turn comes from the Latin *amator* (lover).

ANARCHY

1. A state of disorder due to absence or nonrecognition of authority or other controlling systems.
2. Absence of government and absolute freedom of the individual, regarded as a political ideal.

APPROPRIATION

The strategy of borrowing preexisting images, objects, text, or ideas for use in artwork, or the reworking of styles from earlier, well-known works of art.

AVANT-GARDE

Favoring or introducing experimental or new ideas, forms, or subject matter.

BRICOLAGE

Construction or creation from a diverse range of available materials.

COLLAGE

An artistic composition made by gluing together various materials (such as paper, cloth, or wood). From the French *coller*, "to glue."

COMPOSITION

The placement or arrangement of elements within a work of art.

CONCRETE POEM

A poem that takes the visual space and graphic patterns of the letters and words on the page into consideration.

DADA

An antiwar and anti-bourgeois experimental art movement of the early twentieth century that was interested in questioning all aspects of society, including art. Dada artists used **appropriation** and **collage**.

DÉTOURNEMENT

Rerouting, hijacking, or reuse of preexisting artistic elements. Coined by the **Situationist International** movement.

JUXTAPOSITION

The act of placing two or more objects close together, often to contrasting effect.

NIHILISTIC

In possession of the view that life is without objective meaning, purpose, or intrinsic value; characterized by rejection of traditional values and beliefs.

glossary

PARODY

A form of **satire** that imitates a characteristic style through deliberate exaggeration for comic effect.

PASTICHE

An artistic work made in a style that imitates that of another work, artist, or period.

POP ART

A mid-twentieth-century art movement that emerged in America and Britain, drawing inspiration from popular and commercial sources such as Hollywood movies, advertising, product packaging, and comic books.

PROPAGANDA

Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view.

REDACTING

The censoring or obscuring of part of a text for legal or security purposes, often by way of cutting or blacking out words or sentences.

SATIRE

The use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize stupidity or weaknesses, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.

SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL

A mid-twentieth-century alliance of artists and writers whose works critiqued capitalism. They challenged the distinction between artists and consumers, to make cultural production a part of everyday life. The movement is influential in its use of **appropriation** and **détournement**.

SURREALISM

Twentieth-century literary, philosophical, and artistic movement based on the rejection of conventional artistic and moral values and an interest in the workings of the unconscious mind. Like **Dada** artists before them, Surrealists made use of found objects and **collage** techniques.

TABLEAU

A frozen, silent scene meant to tell a story visually, especially referring to an arrangement of people on a stage. Short for "tableau vivant," or "living picture."

online resources

JAMIE REID

anothermanmag.com/life-culture/10568/iconic-punk-artist-jamie-reid-has-some-advice-for-young-creatives

3ammagazine.com/3am/keep-warm-this-winter-make-trouble/

JAMMING!

ijamming.net/Jammingmagazine/Jamming!Magazine.html

BARNEY BUBBLES

testpressing.org/2011/05/the-face-barney-bubbles/

WINSTON SMITH

kolajmagazine.com/content/content/articles/in-paste-trust-conversation-winston-smith/

ANTI-REAGAN PUNK SONGS

westword.com/music/hey-ronnie-here-are-the-top-10-anti-reagan-punk-songs-5690306

GEE VAUCHER

vice.com/en_us/article/zn8z8w/gee-vaucher-crass-introspective-colchester-art

thequietus.com/articles/10865-gee-vaucher-crass-art-interview

youtube.com/watch?time_continue=75&v=ubzKiomuUB0

JULIA GORTON

instagram.com/julia_gorton_nowave/

garage.vice.com/en_us/article/evbke4/julia-gorton-cbgb-television-blondie-devo

credits

AUTHOR

Jamie Mirabella, Education Specialist

EDITOR

Petra Pankow, Associate Director of Education Programs

DESIGNER

Christina Allan, Marketing and Membership Associate

COPY EDITOR

Kristin Kearns

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