

Instructions for authors, subscriptions, and further details:
<http://brac.hipatiapress.com>

Neoliberalism and the Rhetorical Use of Creativity

Almudena Martín Martínez¹

¹) Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain.

Date of publication: Online First - July 19, 2023

Final publication: 3rd October

Edition period: October 2023 – February 2024

To cite this article: Martín, A. (2023). Neoliberalism and the Rhetorical Use of Creativity. *BRAC - Barcelona, Research, Art, Creation. Barcelona, Research, Art, Creation*, 11 (3), pp. 454–475. Doi: 10.17583/brac.11008

To link this article: <https://doi.org/10.17583/brac.11008>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

The terms and conditions of use are related to the Open Journal System and to [Creative Commons Attribution License \(CC-BY\)](#). Authors retain copyright and grant the journal the right of first publication. The CC BY license does not apply to images other than the authors of the text and they are used exclusively as a visual reference for the described research.

Neoliberalism and the Rhetorical Use of Creativity

Almudena Martín Martínez

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain..

(Received: 12 September 2022; Accepted: 14 January 2023; Online First 19 julio 2023; Publicación final: 3 octubre 2023)

Abstract

The subject of study of this article is to examine the neoliberal redefinition of the term creativity and its impact on contemporary art. To achieve this, we will apply a coral and multidisciplinary approach to the concept of creativity, drawing on analytical perspectives from psychology, sociology, anthropology, pedagogy and other fields. We will then contrast these perspectives with the new definitions proposed by neoliberal discourse, investigating several examples that illustrate the manipulation of the neoliberal model in the visual arts. These examples will be drawn from critical interpretations of contemporary works of art belonging to different artistic movements (Banksy, Hirst, Koons). In relation to the methodology, for all the phases of this documentary research project we have relied on a bibliographic review of the main sources regarding creativity, neoliberalism, and art criticism, as well as the visualization of some current professional artistic examples that help to support our argumentative line.

Keywords: Neoliberalism; creativity; art; visual arts

Neoliberalisme i l'Ús Retòric de la Creativitat

Almudena Martín Martínez

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Espanya.

(Rebut: 12 setembre 2022; Acceptat: 14 gener 2023; Publicat: Online First 19 juliol 2023; Publicació final: 3 octubre 2023)

Resum

L'objecte d'estudi del present article és la redefinició que fa el neoliberalisme del terme creativitat i la repercussió d'aquesta redefinició a l'art contemporani. Per tractar aquest tema, apliquem el concepte de creativitat des d'un enfocament coral i multidisciplinari (des de la psicologia, la sociologia, l'antropologia, la pedagogia...) de base analítica per confrontar-lo amb les noves definicions proposades pel discurs neoliberal. A la llum d'aquest contrast semàntic investigarem diversos exemples que fan palès el procés de manipulació del model neoliberal al món de les arts visuals, prenent com a exemples les interpretacions crítiques de diverses obres d'art contemporànies pertanyents a diferents corrents (Banksy, Hirst, Koons). Respecte a la metodologia, per a totes les fases d'aquest projecte de recerca documental s'ha treballat amb una revisió bibliogràfica de les fonts principals pel que fa a la creativitat, el neoliberalisme i la crítica d'art, així com la visualització d'alguns exemples artístics professionals actuals que ens ajuden a evidenciar la nostra línia argumental.

Paraules clau: Neoliberalisme; creativitat; art; arts visuals

Neoliberalismo y el Uso Retórico de la Creatividad

Almudena Martín Martínez

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, España.

(Recibido: 12 septiembre 2022; Aceptado: 14 enero 2023; Publicado: Online First 19 julio 2023; Final publication: 3 October 2023)

Resumen

El objeto de estudio del presente artículo es la redefinición que hace el neoliberalismo del término creatividad y la repercusión de esa redefinición en el arte contemporáneo. Para ello, aplicamos el concepto de creatividad desde un enfoque coral y multidisciplinar (desde la psicología, la sociología, la antropología, la pedagogía...) de base analítica para confrontarlo con las nuevas definiciones propuestas por el discurso neoliberal. A la luz de este contraste semántico investigaremos varios ejemplos que hacen patente el proceso de manipulación del modelo neoliberal en el mundo de las artes visuales, tomando como ejemplos las interpretaciones críticas de diversas obras de arte contemporáneas pertenecientes a distintas corrientes (Banksy, Hirst, Koons). En lo que respecta a la metodología, para todas las fases de este proyecto de investigación documental se ha trabajado con una revisión bibliográfica de las fuentes principales al respecto de la creatividad, el neoliberalismo y la crítica de arte, así como con la visualización de algunos ejemplos artísticos profesionales actuales que nos ayudan a evidenciar nuestra línea argumental.

Palabras clave: Neoliberalismo; creatividad; arte; artes visuales

Drafting a definition for creativity requires a multidisciplinary approach. To this end, we have drawn upon a range of literature encompassing the works of various specialists in psychology (Edward De Bono, Howard Gardner, Keith Sawyer), sociology (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi), anthropology (Tim Ingold) and pedagogy (Bernadette Duffy). This diversity of perspectives shows us an idea of what can be considered a perception of the concept in consonance with human and social science, and of its importance in the actual context.

Once epistemologically established, we will move onto studying how neoliberalism (considered as a global phenomenon from the 1980s onwards) has adopted the term of creativity to change its definition, as it has done with other concepts related with emotions. This will allow us to ascertain that this use has not been altruistic, but rather responds to particular interests that have led to the utilization of contemporary art as a means of ideological promotion through the construction of an uncritical image of modernity. We will base this exposition on statements from authors who have developed a critical perspective on the relationship between economic strategies and their intervention in the art environment, such as Julian Stallabrass, Olav Velthuis, and Jonathan Jones.

In addition, Pierre Bourdieu will provide us with a significant connection between all the previous textual material and the *symbolic good* art world, based on his concepts of habitus:

Since the habitus is an unlimited capacity to create in totally (controlled) freedom products - thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions - which are always limited by the historically and socially located conditions of their production, the conditioned and conditional freedom, it guarantees that it is as far from a creation of unpredictable innovation as it is from a simple mechanical reproduction of the initial conditions. (Bourdieu, 1991, p.96)

Bourdieu also associates it with the concept of a social campus:

Thus, the subject of the artwork is neither a singular artist, an apparent cause, nor a social group [...] but the whole field of artistic production

[...]. The subject of the work is thereby a habitus in relation to a position, that is to say, to a field [...]. (Bourdieu, 1980, p.3)

Bourdieu's contribution will allow us to have an explanatory framework of how art is also part of this social universe in which we will value what is and what is not the artistic work, and what factual powers determine it always in line with the characteristics of neoliberalism of western societies.

In addition to this bibliographic selection, critical analyses of certain contemporary works of art that, due to their particular characteristics, help us delimit and exemplify the aforementioned explanatory framework relative to the condition of *the artistic* will be added. Hirst, Banksy, and Koons, among others, are the artists that will be cited for this specific purpose.

With regard to the methodology, the research is documentary, qualitative, analytical and descriptive. The methodological process, as already noted, will pursue the following steps:

- Selection of the main historical and current literary sources on the different objects of study and the objectives set.
- Grouping texts according to the indicators that visualise the purpose of the research.
- Analysing the constructive documents of the thesis on creativity and neoliberalism.
- Analysing the art industry as an example.
- Development and conclusion: the commodification of art has altered its practice, its sense as a symbolic good, and even as a social fact.

The idea presented in the theoretical framework should validate the relevance of our argumentative stance while providing original content for the discussion that allows us to conclude the topic at hand.

Towards a Definition of Creativity

Establishing a specific definition of the term creativity does not seem appropriate in this analysis. The term is broad enough to attempt to restrict it, which would likely determine its use in such research. In fact, the notions of the concept that are now in vogue hinder the task of

establishing an indisputable definition. Neither does a consultation of encyclopedias and dictionaries offer much information beyond the fact that they usually associate this word with problem-solving, imagination, and novelty. As an example, the entry in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines creativity as "the ability to make or otherwise bring into existence something new, whether a new solution to a problem, a new method or device, or a new artistic object or form" (*Britannica*, 2020).

Therefore, it seems preferable to propose an interdisciplinary approach to the subject (psychological, sociological, anthropological, pedagogical, etc.), so that this convergence of criteria leads us towards a general definition that is not attached to any specific source.

Some experts in the psychological approach to creativity have also analyzed these clichés. According to Keith Sawyer (2011), the preconceived ideas that dominate most Western conceptions of creativity (which he calls beliefs or myths) originate from the fact that capitalist society is fundamentally individualistic and encourages the propensity to view creative individuals as possessing special qualities that differentiate them from the average person. Furthermore, he rejects the notion that creativity is enhanced by solitude or that ideas come to people suddenly and even mysteriously, arguing instead that "it can originate from nature, group activity, or social practices" (2006, p.40).

Howard Gardner, whose most well-known contribution to the field of psychology is the notion of multiple intelligences, also seeks to demystify innateness:

Creative individuals are remarkable for their ability to adapt to almost any situation and to make do with whatever is at hand to reach their goals. If I had to express in one word what makes their personalities different from others, it's complexity. (1993, p.34)

Similarly, Edward De Bono (1994), who also combats the tendency to attribute any sort of mysticism to creative abilities, considers creative thinking as a distinct form of information control that belongs alongside other techniques such as logic, mathematics, and computer simulation. Hence, he asserts that "creativity involves breaking out of established patterns in order to look at things in a different way" (1986, p.6).

In response to the question, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1997) combined sociological and logical perspectives based on systems theory.

He argues that rather than focusing on a detailed examination of the creative subject, creative process, or created object, what matters is the relationship between domain, field, and individual (recognizable as culture, society, and personal creation). Creativity is not just a mental process; it is also the result of the interaction between each individual's sociocultural origin and their subjective thinking. It is the field that determines whether a process is creative or not in a given domain. This suggests that creativity arises from a social structure in which decisions are made about an individual product, rather than being primarily an individual product. Any action or notion that alters or transforms an existing domain qualifies as creative as long as it is within the scope of the party that generates it. This suggests that creativity is not something to be practiced or possessed, but something that happens: "creativity does not happen inside people's heads, but in the interaction between a person's thoughts and the sociocultural context. It is a systemic rather than an individual phenomenon" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 42).

This analysis can be compared to that of experts in social anthropology such as Tim Ingold (2007), who emphasizes that combining creativity and innovation risks viewing the creative process as an isolated event disconnected from the interaction of all factors involved. We can also identify authors who have conducted more in-depth research on the topic in the educational field. This is the case of Bernadette Duffy, who states that:

The basis of creativity lies in imagination, the ability to visualize and generate images and ideas in the mind, which can then be expressed and communicated to others in a variety of ways. Creativity flourishes where there is openness to experiences, an attitude of questioning, willingness to take risks, and confidence to experiment. (2006, p. 4)

Overall, this collaborative vision of creativity provides some common traits that should be considered when analyzing how the term has been manipulated by neoliberalism: it is a non-innate quality that can be learned, linked to the resolution of new situations, and can only be generated in social contexts and not in situations of isolation.

The Instrumentalization of Creativity in the Neoliberal Discourse

Despite discussions and research on creativity existing for a long time before the 1950s and 1960s, in these decades new perspectives on the topic began to emerge, not only from the standpoint of psychology but also from the perspectives of business, public policies, design, and military strategy. However, it was in the mid-1970s that these issues became more specific, coinciding with the more dramatic consequences of the so-called Oil Crisis in a context that economist and anthropologist David Harvey define in his *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* as follows:

The crisis of capital accumulation in the 1970s affected everyone through the combination of rising unemployment and accelerating inflation. Discontent was widespread (...). When growth collapsed in the 1970s, when real interest rates went negative and paltry dividends and profits were the norm, then upper classes everywhere felt threatened. (Harvey, 2007, pp. 14-15)

The interventionist economic model (*embedded liberalism*, as Harvey defines it) that had allowed for almost constant growth for three decades was entering a dead end.

Due to these new challenges, various definitions and applications of the term creativity evolved, all of them related to a particular interest or objective. This rhetorical operation became visible in the early 1980s when economists such as Richard A. Posner argued that "creativity is the ability to recognize and satisfy unmet needs. It is the ability to create a new product or process, or improve an existing one, in response to a need, a problem, or an opportunity" (1972, p.36).

The success of the process of converting emotions into capabilities to meet the requirements of an increasingly demanding work environment has been tied in with the generation of a new cultural industry represented and shaped by this new social class of creative individuals. To refer to this group, economist Richard Florida coined the term *creative class*. According to the author, in the US alone, this group encompasses some 40 million workers, which constitutes about a third of the US workforce. Within this group, a truly creative part makes up the super-creative core: a core that encompasses variables such as popularity factor, degree of ideological and racial tolerance, dress codes or even sexual orientation. This *superhuman capital* is quantified in the so-called Bohemian Index, which serves companies as a new type of investment:

"access to talented and creative people is to modern business what access to coal and iron ore was to steel-making" (2011, p.50).

However, as Alberto Santamaria (2018) points out, commitment is required to protect the free society provided and guaranteed by liberalism and to maintain its social dominance, and "this will not be achieved through the imposition of rules but through sensitive policies, affective diffusion strategies, through the narrative of effort and overcoming developed through the rhetoric of emotions" (2018, p.45). Thus, ideas such as imagination, creativity, and innovation were once again appropriated and incorporated into the language of productivism.

So, what does this new form of innovation promoted by neoliberalism imply? What sets it apart from the definitions of creativity given in the previous section? An example is provided by Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in her speech presented at the Dubai World Government Summit:

Creativity is one of the most important tools for economic and social progress. Countries and companies that are leaders in the creative and cultural sphere are better positioned to adapt to economic and social challenges, and to seize the opportunities offered by globalization. To address the challenges of the future, we must focus on the development of a creative economy and harness the power of technology and innovation to drive growth and prosperity. (2019)

This paragraph demonstrates a tendency towards affective neoliberal rhetoric: through the frequent use of verbs such as possess and have, which clearly connect with the idea of property linked to progress and continuous economic growth. Hence, countries are referred to as leaders in the creative and cultural sphere.

From this perspective, creativity is strictly a tool linked to economic progress and the sustainability of infinite growth. Richard Sennett, a sociologist, and professor at the London School of Economics, stated that, beyond art, creativity "is also about the formation of new products, new methods, new designs, new services, new organizations. Creativity (...) is about producing something new within the limitations of what already exists; it is a discipline of constraint" (2006, p.78).

Through this rhetorical operation, neoliberalism generates discourses in which creativity becomes a concept devoid of its original value and is instead viewed through the lens of productivity, as David Harvey asserts:

Creativity in the neoliberal era has become a commodity, a value that is sold in the art market. Contemporary art, in particular, has become a tool for neoliberal capitalism, as its value is measured not only by its aesthetic quality but also by its ability to generate financial profits. Artists are now forced to produce works that are attractive to wealthy buyers, rather than focusing on creative exploration and artistic innovation. (2010, p.15)

From this perspective, we move on to the next section, in which we will delve into the consequences of this subversion in the practice and function of contemporary art.

A Battle for the Control of the Symbolic Value of Contemporary Art and its Commercialization

In the previous sections, we have examined how neoliberalism has substantially modified the value of creativity, shifting it towards pragmatism. This new paradigm also affects the conception of artistic creativity, specifically in the quantification and rentability of art. Bourdieu's analysis (1968) in this matter is particularly interesting. The author suggests two concepts, habitus, and field, on which he bases an explanation of this relationship. The first, habitus, consists of:

“A network of schemes of practical production and, at the same time, a system of schemes of perception and appreciation of the practices. And, in both cases, its processes express the social position in which it has been articulated. As a result, the habitus produces practices and representations that are disposable for classification, which are objectively differentiated.” (2000, pp.134-135)

In this way, schemes of thought, perception and action are acquired by a series of habits in the context of the individual. Their practices are defined according to the constraints of social conditions that are acquired over the course of history, so that they are embedded and endure over time.

To define the space in which society and the individual converge, Bourdieu also defines the social concept he refers to as a field, in which it is established that the distinction of social activities is organized according to a subset of social spaces, such as the artistic or the economic. These fields are apparently autonomous, but in reality, the struggle of social agents to occupy dominant positions determines that specific organizations also end up interfering in them historically, altering their interrelation and their own laws of procedure.

In the case of the field of art, its own space of thought and creativity is not disputed: as happens in the field of science with scientists, artists develop their contributions on the basis of specific premises and experimentation, from which situations of creative knowledge are generated. This approach reminds us of that of Duffy (2006), who considers that in order to be able to speak of intrinsic creativity in a specific discipline, it is necessary to have knowledge of previous objects and events on which it is essential to act (what the author names *spaces of creation*): hence, social interaction and the kind of relationship that we maintain with the environment are decisive for the creative process.

However, modern art has undergone a gradual process of cognitive devaluation in which its value, beyond that determined by each discipline's own competence, is certified by critics, gallery owners, collectors, curatorial evaluations, etc. This implies that institutions outside the art field have the power to legitimize what art is and is not. In this sense, Moraza (2008) points out:

In the societies of knowledge, human wisdom is seen as a capitalization of labor, of its emotions, its sensitivity, and its creativity. The cognitive qualities of art are either at the service of the aesthetic strategies of this new *middle* age or they are marginalized or dismissed. (p. 2)

In this way, by becoming economic goods, works of art acquire value not only for their skillful execution or even for their influence within the field itself but above all for their price. According to Sánchez Vázquez (2005), capitalist society only opens up spaces for artistic manifestations that are "at the service of the alienation of human beings, while, on the contrary, it is hostile to any artistic production that seeks to maintain its true

essence: nature as a free and emancipatory activity" (pp. 112-115). In this sense, the pursuit of maximum profit contaminates art, which must therefore adapt to "mass production techniques, which can only be achieved through standardization of products that clearly undermine creative freedom" (Cepelledo, 2017, p. 7).

The sociologist Olav Velthuis provides the key to understanding how the semantic perversion of the term creativity directly affects the function of art in the neoliberal context:

Contemporary art has become a means for the accumulation of capital, but it has also been instrumentalized by governments and corporations as a tool for promoting creativity and innovation. This instrumentalization of art has led to an increasing homogenization of it, as artists are pressured to produce works that conform to the expectations of the market and political agendas. In this context, creativity has become an exploitable resource, which has led to a growing gap between artistic production and authentic creativity. (2017, p.78)

The crux of the matter must be sought in the difficulty of combating this resignification from within the artwork itself. Artists such as Banksy or Maurizio Cattelan have made this clear by claiming that their art consists of a confrontation with the corporations of art itself. The controversy aroused by the first artist deepens the paradox that his panels, graffiti, and street art fetch colossal prices when they become a trend, in such a way that the situation they seek to undermine is, on the contrary, brought to light in the rawest possible way. This power of monetizing the artwork reaches the extreme when it is not only the originals, but also their reproductions that are subject to trading: posters, wallpaper, silkscreen printing on clothes or coffee cups...



Image 3. Banksy (2005). Soldier throwing flowers. Stencil (stencil graffiti) on a wall in Jerusalem, Israel. Courtesy ZaBanker - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0



Image 4. Etsy business image. (2022). Example of symbolic destruction and meaning from the process of industrial commercialization of art. Courtesy of etsy.com

Banksy was also the protagonist at the Sotheby's auction with his artwork *Girl with a balloon*, as it was immediately destroyed by the author after its sale for €1.2 million, but then revalued when it was resold under the name *Love is in the Bin*. This type of operations reveals the state of affairs to the extent that they are paradoxical in that they reproduce and amplify, to the point of caricature, the very situation they denounce. As the art critic Jonathan Jones acutely observes:

Banksy is a product of the same system that he criticizes in his work. His art is a commodity that is commercialized in the globalized art market and sold at exorbitant prices. Instead of subverting the system, Banksy has become a product of it. His work does not truly question the neoliberal system but rather reinforces it by perpetuating the illusion that art can be a means for social and political change. Ultimately, Banksy is a superficial artist who plays with rebellion but cannot offer a real alternative to the status quo. (2017)



Image 5. Banksy (2018). Love is in the bin. Shredding the Girl with a balloon in Sotheby's auction. Spray paint and acrylic on canvas, mounted on board, in artist's frame, 101 by 78 by 18 cm. Courtesy Banksy and laverdadnoticias.com

It is instructive to discuss in this context cases such as the artist Damien Hirst, who in 2020 initiated a wholesale auction that in a matter of hours made more than 200 million dollars. This participation of the company in art alters the conception of the artwork itself by adding its potential economic return to the process of its creation. This is how Maite Nieto analyses it in her publication in the newspaper El País, in which she states that “Hirst received equal parts praises and criticisms for turning an auction house into an exhibition hall and making it so clear that his interest was not only in making art, but in selling it” (2020).



Image 1. Hirst, D. (1991). The Physical Impossibility of Death In The Mind Of Someone Living. Tiger shark, glass, steel and formaldehyde, 7 x 17 x 7 feet. Courtesy Damien Hirst and Hirst Holdings/Tate Modern/PA

Another obvious example between art or speculation is the work of the same author *For the love of God*, which again approaches the artistic genre of the *Vanitas* and the relevance of death with a mundane purpose. As an example of the speculative value of art, the same newspaper published that:

With its 8,601 diamonds (with a total of 1,106.18 carats), valued at around 18 million euros, the sculpture has caused a sensation and controversy since its presentation in London last year [...]. However, also on this occasion the controversy accompanies Hirst, because according to British newspapers, friends, and associates of the artist himself contributed high bids to the success of the auction, paying large sums for several works on the first day and setting the tone of the auction second. (*El País*, 2008)

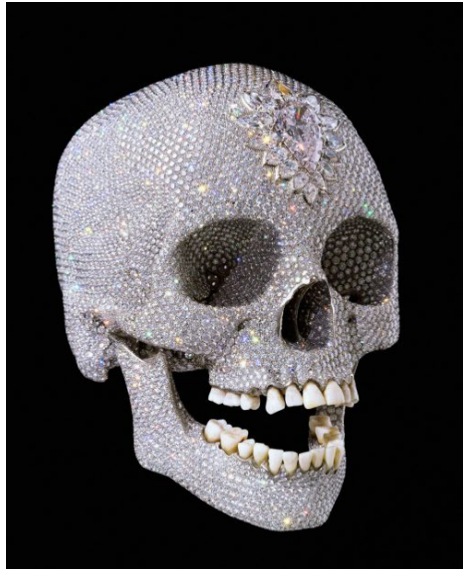


Image 2. Hirst, D. (2007). For the love of God. Diamond-encrusted human skull. Courtesy Damien Hirst and EFE Agency

These are examples of the commercialization of the artwork, its immersion in the world of entertainment, the aesthetic and ethical devaluation, and the disruption of the power of representation of the human being within the autonomy of art, all of which highlight the separation of the spheres of power from the society that supports it.

In this regard, Adorno (2005), following Benjamin's pioneering testimony, said that the technical reproducibility of the artwork modifies the relation of the mass to art (1936), analyzed the influence of the culture industry or mass culture to describe the evolution of the avant-garde at the beginning of the century. If we consider the industry as the standardization of the product and the masses as the accessory element to the machinery, it could be assumed that the merchants of culture tried to make an economic profit, repeating the content of the works, and disguising it as novelty and turning it into a commodity.

The discussion has also generated a reversible movement. There is no place for a simply scholastic evaluation of art: the artistic practices

(performance, art video or installations) are disqualified by conservative critics. For critics like Avelina Lésper, art should appeal to the history of art to update the value of the artwork, but not to erode it. Regarding contemporary art, she stated in an interview with the Spanish newspaper *La Vanguardia*:

It lacks aesthetic values and is based on unrealities. On the one hand, it seeks to change the reality of an object through words, which is impossible, by attributing characteristics that are invisible and values that are not verifiable. Moreover, we are supposed to accept and assimilate them as art. It is like a religious dogma. It is also a fraud because it is sustained only by the market, which is fluctuating and artificial in most cases. (2014)

Nowadays, according to this conservative sector, art must appeal to the history of art to update the value of the artwork, but not to erode it. Nevertheless, this would mean limiting the field of art, in which art works such as *Comedian*, by Cattelan (consisting of a banana hung on the wall with adhesive tape), or *Ballon Girl*, by Banny (destroyed at the same auction once sold with a guillotine), would not be given artistic value as such, regardless of the fact that they have reached millionaire sales on the market. An obvious paradigm of this tension is found in certain critical evaluations, such as Jonathan Johns' regarding Jeff Koons' *Sunflowers* exhibition, where he wrote: "Jeff Koons' empty arrogance is astonishing. His enormous sculptures are impressive, yes, but they are impressive for being so empty. Koons is selling an image of success, not an idea. His work is a mockery of art, not a celebration of it" (2005).

In sum, in a similar way to what has happened in fields such as education, the influence of capitalist rhetoric in art has substantially determined the evolution of art, not only in terms of profitability but also in the pure production of art. The following reflection by art commentator Julian Stallabrass succinctly summarizes this state of affairs:

Contemporary art has been used as a means for promoting neoliberalism and constructing an image of modernity. This relationship has led to a standardization of art that has made it more accessible and understandable to the general public, but it has also caused a loss of its critical and subversive capacity. Instead of

challenging the status quo, contemporary art has become a tool for its perpetuation. (2018, p.34)

Conclusions

We began this text's argumentative journey with an interdisciplinary investigation into the notion of creativity. While this stance has made it clear how difficult it is to define the term without ambiguities, it has also allowed us to extract several aspects that are shared by the most recognized ideas among theorists in the human sciences. This panorama of creativity has been a mandatory work to evaluate the method used by neoliberalism to give new meanings to creativity and other emotive ideas. This strategy began at the beginning of its discourse when it established individual freedom and the free market as an indissoluble binomial and has been modified and expanded since the 1980s.

We have cited both direct sources (books on business management, documents, royal decrees, popular volumes, etc.) and critical authors whose work specifically consisted of a methodical assessment of this new interested application of creativity in our analysis of this reassignment of meaning.

In the final section of this argumentative journey, we have analyzed the analogous operation that capitalist rhetoric has developed to alter the conditions of possibility and generation of the artwork. We have started with Bourdieu's theses to demonstrate to what extent the redefinition of certain concepts in the interest of strict economic profitability can lead to a radical alteration of the state of the art. Subsequently, we have reviewed works of art that exemplify the attitude of some artists whose contemporary artwork exemplifies the paradox of an art that grotesquely reproduces and amplifies the very situation it denounces. Likewise, we have traced an argumentative line through the opinions of critical authors who demonstrate how the semantic perversion fostered by neoliberalism has attacked the core of the question of the possibility of generating critical creativity in artistic praxis.

In the field of art, the result of its commodification through the semantic alteration of creativity has managed to alter the practice, the symbolic good, and even the social fact of art. Elite consumer goods have become a stereotyped model that overlooks the relevance of the art system as power and all the institutions surrounding it.

References

- Adorno, Th. W. (2005). Teoría estética. Ediciones Akal
- Banksy (2005). Soldier throwing flowers [Stencil graffiti]. Courtesy ZaBanker - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0.
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=93718638>
- Benjamin, W. (2008). *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*. *Illuminations*, 217-251.
<https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/benjamin.pdf>
- Bourdieu , P. (1968). Éléments d'une théorie sociologique de la perception artistique. *Les arts dans la société*, 20/4, pp. 5-14
- Bourdieu , P. (1980). *Campo de poder; campo intelectual*. *Itinerario de un concepto*. Montessor
<https://circulosemiotico.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/bourdieu-pierre-campo-de-poder-campo-intelectual.pdf>
- Bourdieu , P. (1991). El Sentido Práctico. Tauro
- Bourdieu, P. (2000). *La distinción: Criterio y bases sociales del gusto*. Akal.
- Britannica. (2020). *Encyclopedia Britannica*.
<https://www.britannica.com/>
- Cepelledo, J. (2017). *Praxis, estética y política en la filosofía de Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez*. Transatlantic Studies Network (TSN), Volumen 3.
<https://dialnet.unirioja.es/descarga/articulo/6229216.pdf>
- Colomé, S. (2014, febrero 6). *Avelina Léser: El arte contemporáneo es un fraude*. La vanguardia.
<https://www.lavanguardia.com/cultura/20140206/54400875066/entre-vista-avelina-lesper-arte-contemporaneo.html>
- Csikszentmihalyi , M. (1988). *Society, Culture and Person: A System View of Creativity*. Robert Sternberg (Ed.), *The Nature of Creativity: Contemporary Psychological Perspectives*, 325-339.
<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1988-98009-013>
- Csikszentmihalyi , M. (1997). *Creativity: Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention*. Harper Collins Publishers.

- De Bono, E. (1986). *Ideas about thinking: Excerpts from Edward de Bono's "letter to thinkers"*. The Journal of Product Innovation Management, Volume 3 (1), 57-62.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/230071525_Ideas_About_Thinking_Excerpts_from_Edward_de_Bono%27s_Letter_to_Thinkers
- De Bono, E. (1994). *El pensamiento creativo*. Paidós.
- Duffy, B. (2006). *Supporting Creativity and Imagination in the Early Years*. Open University Press.
- EFE (2007, agosto 31). *La calavera humana incrustada de diamantes se vende por 74 millones de euros*. El Mundo.
<https://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2007/08/30/cultura/1188491390.html>
- Etsy (2022, September 25). *Banksy artist images sourced from Etsy*
<https://www.etsy.com/es/listing/1109017569/banksy-art-throwing-flowers-street-art?gpla=1&gao=1&>
- Florida, R. (2011). *El gran reset: Nuevas formas de vivir y trabajar para impulsar la prosperidad*. Paidós
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Creating Minds: An Anatomy of Creativity Seen Through the Lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Gandhi*. Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (2014). *Inteligencias múltiples: la teoría en la práctica*. Paidós Ibérica.
- Harvey, D. (2007). *Breve historia del capitalismo*. Akal.
- Harvey, D. (2010). *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism*. Oxford University Press.
- Hirst, D. (1991). *The Physical Impossibility of Death In The Mind Of Someone Living [Tiger shark, glass, steel and formaldehyde]*. Tate Modern, Londres, United Kingdom.
<http://magazine.art21.org/2012/02/02/on-view-now-damien-hirsts-spot-paintings-and-the-joy-of-color/new-tate-season/>
- Ingold, T. & Hallam, E. (2007). *Creativity and Cultural Improvisation*. Routledge.
- Jones, J. (2017). *Banksy is not the revolutionary artist he thinks he is*. The Guardian.
- Jones, J. (2015). *Jeff Koons: A master of emotional manipulation*. The Guardian.

- Lagarde, C. (2019). *The Creative Economy: Harnessing Creativity for Future Growth*. <https://www.imf.org/es/Home>
- Moraza, J. L. (2008). *El arte como conocimiento*. Ediciones Akal.
- Moraza, J. L. (2018). *Arte en la era del capitalismo cognitivo*. Arte y Sociedad (15) pp. 81-112
<https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=6562332>
- Nieto, M. (2020, marzo 3). *Damien Hirst, el artista que ganó 180 millones en dos días y rozó la bancarrota*. El País.
<https://elpais.com/gente/2020-03-03/damien-hirst-el-artista-que-gano-180-millones-en-dos-dias-y-rozo-la-bancarrota.html>
- Posner, R. A. (1972). *Economic analysis of law*. Asper Publishers
- Santamaría, A. (2018). *En los límites de lo posible: Política, cultura y capitalismo afectivo*. Ediciones Akal.
- Sawyer, R. K. (2006). *Educating for innovation. Thinking Skills and Creativity*, ScienceDirect, Volume 1 (1), 41-48.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2005.08.001>
- Sawyer, R. K. (2011). *The Western Cultural Model of Creativity: Its Influence on Intellectual Property Law*. Notre Dame Law Review, Volume 86 (5), 2027-2056.
<https://scholarship.law.nd.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1099&context=ndlr>
- Sennett, R. (2006). *The Culture of the New Capitalism*. Yale University Press.
- Stallabrass, J. (2018). *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Trujillo, E. (2021, Octubre 14). *Banksy destruye su obra pero aún así vende con récord millonario*. La verdad noticias.
<https://laverdadnoticias.com/mundo/Banksy-destruye-su-obra-pero-a-un-asi-se-vende-con-record-millonario-20211014-0146.html>
- Velthuis, O. (2017). *The cost of creativity: How the neoliberal era is damaging our universities, cities, and culture*. Verso Books.

Name and Surname: Almudena Martín Martínez

Membership: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-0690-9114

Email address: almudenamartinmartinez@gmail.com

Contact Address: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Facultat d'Educació.