

Dada and Punk
The Influence of Dada in Punk Design



Visual Arts

Keywords: imprisonment sentence, minor offense, crime, criminal offense, juvenile justice, rehabilitation, etc.

Lorik Sylejmani

Prof. Master of Design
www.loriksylejmani.com

Abstract

The justice system in our country, as in many other countries, is trying to change and reform, moving from a punitive approach to a system that values restorative justice embraces the principles of rehabilitation and reintegration into society and the implementation of alternative measures against imprisonment, seeing the limitation of juvenile delinquency only as a last resort. Progress in this direction was also marked by the adoption of the Juvenile Justice Code. This Code considers detention of juveniles only as a last resort and sanctions alternative measures for children in conflict with the law. The Code brings the juvenile justice system in compliance with the Constitution, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and international standards, and other international norms aimed at protecting the juvenile and the effective protection of the highest interests of the juvenile. One of the international standards of juvenile justice is the use of imprisonment as a last resort and reintegration as a goal of the justice system. Justice should be gentle with children and be on their side. Freedom of liberty as a last resort and for a short period of time is clearly expressed and dealt with in international acts, which I have previously dealt with in some other scientific works. What is important and what I would like to present in this article in terms of applying the "punishment of imprisonment" measure is to know about the implementation of legal provisions in favor of juvenile justice and the relevant gaps. This is done by focusing primarily on national legislation.

Cabanne: For you, who are the greatest contemporary painters?
*Marcel Duchamp: Oh!...contemporaries...I don't know. When contemporary starts? In 1900?*⁶¹

Visualization of the Dadaist concept artistically was articulated with the intent that the basic rules of the art of that time were not taken as an ultimate framework of existing art values, but at any case this conceptual visual narration was created in a completely different way. Although strange, out of standards, surprising, Dadaists created and insisted in their original approach towards art by reaming loyal to the utmost. If a poster according to the strict academic rules had to give a clear message, that is, any kind information about the event, dada in their posters broke all the rules of composition. Often this approach created confusion. Dada artists insisted that life as process (birth-growth-death) and war as phenomenon does not make sense. Therefore, from this finding, Dadaists proclaimed that their art did not make sense. This kind of approach we find within the punk music – music and its idea constitutes on premises that nothing makes sense, *they made you a moron, Potential H-bomb...There's no future, No future for you.*⁶² The idea incorporation and diver's artistic formulation of entire Dadaist movement, and particularly the posters consist in several levels, where the essential elements are collage and typography. Within this framework of style are also the designs of LPs and posters during the late 70s and early 80s that are inevitable encountered in the time of punk and new wave.

⁶¹ Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp, Pierre Cabanne, with appreciation of Jasper Johns, (I like breathing better than working) pp 93

⁶² Sex Pistol, *God Save The Queen*, album *Nevermind The Bolocks*, 1977, [Warner Bros. Records](http://www.warnerbros.com)

While Glam Rock experimented with the image of a particular model that attracted the attention with its presence, punk refused it aesthetically. This kind of aesthetic refuse within punk iconography, we can see it especially in dressing style also in posters and LP covers. If we are referred to this interconnection of two powerful artistic styles, is difficult to say that punk overcome dada as style, in the end this was not the purpose of punk. Punk had it enough to grip to something that was different and to continue its image. In the core of these two styles is: dissatisfaction and revolt, protest against the social situation in general and the devaluation of art in particular. *Incandescence and integrity of this individualist revolt where to become the yardstick for all avant-garde art in the future*⁶³. Each of them, dada and punk at the time they appeared in their scenes became cultural infusion; their aim was to take their art in a next intellectual level. They permanently insisted in ignoring rules and artistic concepts, acceptance of meaningless values of time, nihilism, cynicism, decadence and the meaningless quotations in their works were moments of expression both for dada and punk, that mocked the beauty and sublime as postulates of aesthetics.

*“Dadaism came as a moral need and a flamboyant desire to create absolute morality, from the deep sense of man who is the center of all spiritual development. Man must demonstrate his power to the recognitions he has for himself as human beings and against the dead things and the goods not achieved ... Dada is not modern at all, it is rather a return to a quasi-Buddhist religion of indifference. Dada puts an artificial sweetness onto things, a snow of butterflies coming out of a conjurer's skull. Dada is stillness and does not understand the passion*⁶⁴”

Tristan Tzara said. With this statement Dadaism transformed into a movement against absurd and with quench of traditional values become nihilistic.

*Sculpture already made*⁶⁵ or later known as *Ready-made*, was the technique that Dadaists invented in art, a concept that Duchamp created to *discourage aesthetics*⁶⁶; the same concept was applied in posters. The Dadaist used fonts and typography with different dimensions and standards, medium-sized *sense-rife* and at the most of the time when they wanted to emphasize something they used bold typography as their style. Photomontages, photographic manipulations and the collages of the same were their distinctive sign, although the phenomenon of collage we encounter earlier in the works of George Braque and Pablo Picasso. Poster space was tonal mostly white or lighted color to that extent that it did not appear at empty space. Typography was never compiled in standard contours, so that these poster were fulfilled with diagonal slogans and vertical/ horizontal compositional slides. A few decades later punk bands posters would have the same concept. This time we will have advancement in typography which is not entirely linear, but it is chaotic, instead of one font that Dadaist used, punk posters would play with every letter/font, by leaving you the impression of cutting into each one of them, by sorting them one after other creating the names of bands, or albums or venues where the concerts are going to be held.

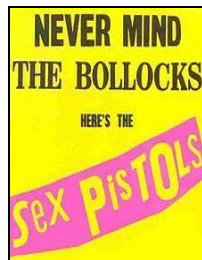
⁶³ Dada the revolt of art, Marc Dachy, Thames and Hudson, pp 117

⁶⁴ Tzara, Tristan, *Seven Dada Manifestos and Lampisteries*, Oneworld Classics, 2011, pp 22

⁶⁵ Marcel Duchamp to Suzanne Duchamp, 15 January 1916 (Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.), translated with commentary by Francis M. Naumann, "Affectueusement, Marcel," pp 5

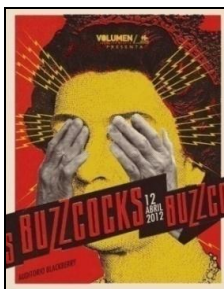
⁶⁶ Hans Richter, *Dada Art and Anti-Art* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), pp. 207-8

Simple, not with any substantial message, punk passed from using few colors as it was in Dadaism to the permanent emphasis of intense tones such as the “*Never Mind the Bollocks*” by Sex Pistols, where the yellow color in the back of the poster insists in her presence with highlighted pink in the logo of this Neo-Dadaist band. As Tom Sandqvist states “*Anyone who asks that is further removed from Dadaism than an animal from epistemological principles. Dada has long recognized peace and order as a need characteristic of people who want their experience substantiated by ethics. Dada cannot be justified by any system that approaches people with “Thou shalt.” Dada rests within itself and acts of its own accord, just as the sun acts when it rises in the sky or when a tree grows. The tree grows without wanting to grow. Dada does not burden its actions with “goal”-oriented motives. Dada does not foster abstractions in words, formulae and systems intended to be applied to human society. It needs no proof and no justification, neither through formulae nor through systems. Dada is pure creative process. Dada has given birth to the torpor and tempo of these times from its own head*⁶⁷.



1. Sex Pistols, *Never Mind the Bollocks*

Poster of the band Buzzcocks showing a gig has the main icon the Queen of England, this time eyes are covered with hand licks, and in the space where the mouth is, in a form a collage the band name is written, as though the queen has the honor to introduce the band, but strangely with closed eyes. This poster is linked with a poster that is created years ago by the Sex Pistols with “*God Save the Queen*”, where the title of the song covers the eyes of the Queen and the space of the mouth is covered by the logo of the band. Another moment in redesigning, we have the poster, that at the center of the poster is United Kingdom flag, this time torn by the symbiosis of the song title *Anarchy in UK*, collaged in logo already known for Sex Pistols. This process of cutting different images placed within the same concept.



2. The Buzzcocks



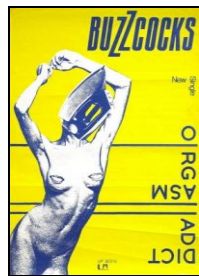
3. Sex Pistols, *God Save the Queen*



4. Sex Pistols, *Anarchy in the UK*

⁶⁷ Sandqvist, Tom, *Dada East The Romantics of Cabaret Voltaire*, MIT Press, 2006, pp 212-213 (For further information look at Mansbach, “*Modern Art in Eastern Europe*”)

If the spirit and anti-aesthetics of dada has been fundamental to the development and formation of punk culture/ new wave at later years, also as inspiration of LPs and posters of 80s – we can fully distinguish direct inspiration from Dada to the other Buzzcocks single “*Orgasm Addict*”, where with a lemon yellow in the back lies a naked female body and the emphasis is placed on her breasts where the collaged mouth is displayed, this clearly reveals the idea of the connection of the poster with the name of the single and naturally the heat of the iron for ironing at maximum will make your experience orgasm. Whereas, the poster for the new wave concert at The Round House in London, there is a white face in a pink background is covered with a lightweight typographic image almost thrown over the paper, among which a blurred sentence looks the only “normal” thing in the space of the poster.



5. Buzzcocks, *Orgasm Addict*



6. Poly Styrene, X-Ray Spex at *The Round House*, 1978

The Simplicity of the elements presented in the poster of punk that are more close to the dada spirit – we can find them on the poster of the band The Exploited, in which all the typography is diagonal not too sloping, while the central figure of the poster is a pose returned to profile of vocalist during the singing that indicates to you the impression of non-quality photocopy.



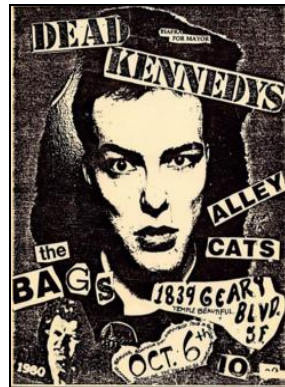
7. The Exploited, *Adams Ave Theatre*

Also in the Blondie poster, as a central figure of the poster her image seems too been cropped from another image and putted into the poster. This is the face and glance of the New York icon in black and white, where the typography by inertia starts from her forehead, to her cheekbone that is characteristic of Blondie, and ends to her thin and smooth neck. There is another poster of a concert that feature some bands like: X-Ray, Black State etc , where the headliners of the show are Dead Kennedy’s, therefore as a central part of illustration we have the face of the band singer, cropped from another page and restored in the poster, while the other bands names

that will perform appear as artistic illustrations with manners and structures of dada, where it is experimented with different font typography in the distance between the band names that is large.



8. Blondie



9. Dead Kennedys

In an interview for *Journal de Peuple*, a question directed to Tristan Tzara whether he thinks about Dadaism and the end of it, he was deceived: *Never. And what is more, I am anxious to not mention that word anymore, by stating that he was anxious not mentioning that word Dada was a purely personal adventure, the materialization of my disgust. Perhaps it had results, consequences.*⁶⁸

Its continuity and her impact on punk did not end there, the influence of dada continued in new genres like post punk and new wave, this kind of continuity was very normal for the manifestation of this kind of styles represented to the world.

⁶⁸ Journal Du Peuple, April 14, 1923

Lengends of pics:

1. <http://www.volumen.tv/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/flyer-Buzzcocks.jpg>
2. Poster for The Sex Pistols' single 'God Save The Queen', Jamie Reid, May 1977, 69.2 x 98.4 cm, 27 x 38 in. *Courtesy of The Mott Collection*
3. Jamie Reid, [Sex Pistols' "Anarchy in the U.K."](#)
4. Poster for Buzzcocks' single 'Orgasm Addict', Linder Sterling, Malcolm Garrett, November 1977, 99 x 73 cm, 39 x 28 in. *Courtesy of The Mott Collection*
5. Poly Styrene, X-Ray Spex at The Round House, 1978, lithograph. Collection of Andrew Krivine.
6. https://mkrdesignuk.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/216_exploited2.jpg
7. The Blondie poster, Artist: Jerry Paulsen.
8. <https://mkrdesignuk.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/87273361e0262c7a5978b85085fac8fc.jpg>