

Open-air museums: digital cultures, aesthetics and everyday life

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At a time when everything becomes art, art no longer belongs to itself, to the point of overflowing from the frames that have enclosed it for several centuries – museums, galleries, churches – with unprecedented effects not only in the field of aesthetics, but above all in ordinary life. To understand this in depth, it is necessary to take into account the digital reproducibility of the work of art as a dynamic that upsets the relationship between work and spectator, subject and object, politics and everyday life. From the second half of the 18th century onwards, we saw a dynamic of "aestheticization of the public" parallel to the birth of the cultural industry and, therefore, the transformation of culture into merchandise. It is an ambiguous process, as it implies the emergence of the mass as the central subject of our culture, but also its definitive reification. What about aesthetics in such a condition? This study explores the genology and history of this process by updating Walter Benjamin's thinking in relation to the cultural emergencies of our time. In particular, it seems essential to understand what happens to the aura in the context of a condition in which the aesthetic object, the work of art and, more generally, the area that concerns beauty is available, used and consumed in everyday life, to the point of placing our cities as "open air museums".

Keywords: art, digital culture, imaginary, everyday life

Museus a céu aberto: culturas digitais, estética e vida cotidiana

Resumo

Numa época em que tudo se torna arte, a arte já não pertence a si mesma, ao ponto de transbordar dos quadros que a enclausuraram durante séculos – museus, galerias, igrejas – com efeitos inéditos não só e não unicamente no campo da estética, mas sobretudo na vida cotidiana. Para compreender esta dinâmica em profundidade, é necessário ter em conta a reprodutibilidade digital da obra de arte, enquanto dinâmica que perturba a relação entre obra e espectador, sujeito e objeto, política e vida cotidiana. A partir da segunda metade do século XVIII, assistimos a uma dinâmica de "estetização do público" paralela ao nascimento da indústria cultural e, portanto, à transformação da cultura em mercadoria. É um processo ambíguo, pois implica a emergência da massa como sujeito central de nossa cultura, mas também sua reificação definitiva. E quanto à estética em tal condição? O presente estudo explora a genologia e a história desse processo por meio da atualização do pensamento de Walter Benjamin em relação às emergências culturais de nosso tempo. Em particular, parece essencial compreender o que acontece com a aura no contexto de uma condição em que o objeto estético, a obra de arte e, de forma mais geral, a área que diz respeito à beleza está disponível, é usada e consumida no quotidiano, tanto a ponto de colocar nossas cidades como "museus a céu aberto".

Palavras-chave: arte, cultura digital, imaginário, vida cotidiana

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Introduction

Benjamin's thought allows us to shed light on the points on which the dynamics of mediatization of politics first, and the politicization of the spectacle later, were oriented during the 19th century. The first mechanism refers to the disappearance of a rigidly pyramidal, abstract, one-way relationship between political power and the public, while the second refers to the process by which at a certain point everything that, until the previous period, had manifested itself as spectacle, amusement and pure entertainment, tended to be translated into daily life and to claim a will to power. This essay is based on the theoretical interpretation, according to a qualitative approach, of the relationship between art and the public from the 19th century to the present day. The period taken into consideration is the one marked by the birth of the cultural industry and leads to the dynamics of aestheticization of everyday life and digital reproducibility of the work of art.

According to Benjamin (2000), "around 1900, technical reproduction had reached the level that allowed it (...) to conquer an autonomous relationship between the various artistic processes" (p. 21). This is why artistic forms began to insinuate themselves no longer simply as the production of objects or performances, but as the very fact of translating and potentially endlessly replicating what had already been produced by others. This is a central lever for the times to come, since it will make it possible, when the process acquires full maturity, to turn the dimension of what is artistic and the figure of its producer upside down. Thus a double flow is created - a dialogical one - according to which worldly life gradually appropriates, welcomes into its bosom, makes its own the sparks of art, just as it embodies - in the role of producer of the tools of the nascent cultural industry - the role of distributor first of all, and the creator of the latter then, to finally become the object itself, an object of consumption or a raw material of information capitalism in the form of data useful to feed the algorithms that increasingly regulate our lives (Cardon, 2015).

We have to wait for the completion of a long cycle before the presenter of the first local stations becomes the deejay assembler of music from the eighties (Attimonelli, 2008). And yet it is in the initial phase of this journey that the techno-social beginnings for a result of this kind are established. The reproducible artistic object is thus engulfed in the hells of everyday life, it loses its fluorescence and begins to compromise and merge with the beautiful things of bad taste present in everyday life and in its rich, neglected stores. It is no coincidence that the spirit of digital has been defined as a remix culture (Lessig, 2008). If at first the DJ - like the consumer-producer on whom Karl Marx (1980), Alvin Toffler (1980) or Michel De Certeau (1999) wrote - limits himself to selecting the music of others, the time passing this act becomes the source of a true recreation, to the point of attributing to the protagonists of the consoles the role of star (Attimonelli, 2008). If you look closely, they are the ones who give rhythm to the musical time of our times as a perpetual dance - a tragic joy.

The technical reproducibility of the work of art allows it to

go to the front of the recipient (...). The cathedral abandons its location to be welcomed in the office of an art lover; the choir that has been performed in an auditorium or in the open air can be listened to in a room. (Benjamin, 2000, p. 22)

At first glance, to the least attentive observer, this passage may seem to be merely a displacement of the same object into new contexts, in order to allow it to extend beyond its place of origin. However, the *devaluation of its hic et nunc* leads the artistic object to a radical corruption of its "authenticity" and its social mission: it no longer induces a reverential contemplation, it no longer responds to pedagogical principles, it no longer really has a link with the sacred.

The intervention of the technique as an agent of reproduction, multiplication and translation of the

original object means that Beethoven's Ninth Symphony can be listened to as an interlude between one commercial and another of the radio programs, modifying the attentive, ritualized and serious nature of its reception. When, in the eighties, *souvenirs* and gadgets – from towels to stoves – with the reproduction of Gauguin and Seurat began to be mass-produced, after the experiments of pop art and in the full development of consumer society, it became evident that reproducibility was the beginning of an irreversible mutation of the aesthetic object, which gradually became a leisure device capable of enchanting everyday life, giving it a joyful, fun and spectacular aura. Ordinary life avidly swallows up any form previously inscribed and useful to the paradigm of the beautiful to lend it to the satisfaction of its own most immediate, fantastical and carnal desires.

Life becomes a work of art

We thus witnessing, at the turning point between the end of the 19th century and the dawn of the 20th, the beginning of a long process of societal reappropriation of artistic forms, a groundswell that, in taking artistic pieces to the public, will initially intoxicate the latter with art and will cover it with an artistic form, capillarizing in ordinary life the mission that Oscar Wilde (1972) had given himself to make life a work of art. Thus, Nietzsche's (1997) prophecy turns out:

man is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art: what is revealed here in the thrill of intoxication is, in view of the supreme voluptuousness and appeasement of the native One, the artistic power of the whole of nature. (p. 45)

The dimension of bios, of existence as such, is the final destination of this flow, its fulfillment. This will only be fully evident when digital languages, social networks and everything that concerns the aesthetization of the lived will wrap the body of everyone, between the web and the street, in a new light. Their main virtue, in this sense, remains in the possibility given to the social body to express at the same time its material and bodily impulses, the bottom about which Bakhtine (1998) writes, its phantasmagorical impulses and its poetics of being there, of inhabiting the world.

The daily synergies established in this framework, between the marvels and the shadows, the celestial and the terrestrial, the dreamlike and the sensitive, do not simply lead to the public becoming a work of art, but also promote the public becoming of art, as well as a reversibility between subjects and objects. The *public becoming of art* means the dispersion of beauty in the ramifications of ordinary life, where the beauty of the being there and of the being-together prevails over any other canonized and museumized aesthetics. At the same time, it refers to a new and unprecedented reification of the public, because by becoming a work it lends itself to be controlled, manipulated and consumed according to the same rules that govern the system of objects. This is exactly what happens in networked digital life, on Tinder, Instagram, Pornhub, Tik Tok or Snapchat, where the subject becomes a work, the primordial content of communication, while at the same time being involved in frames that make it an information among data, a commodity among the products of digital showcases. In a way, it happens to everyone what happened at the beginning of the star system, when the first celebrities were simultaneously intoxicated and consumed by their popularity. At the time, James Dean and Marilyn Monroe paid for this dynamic with their lives. Today, the same is true of the crisis of individual autonomy in electronic existence, namely the "death" of the online subject, and sometimes even the physical death, by suicide, of people unable to survive the visibility of their private stories.

In many ways, this is a paradigm shift from our sociological and cultural tradition. Mario Perniola (1994), in the wake of Benjaminian thought, will be right to speak of man as a smelling object and the object as a smelling thing, because indeed the contemporary interpenetration between *bios* and *technè* nuances the differences between these orders, which now find themselves intertwined in the same mosaic.

Beyond the artistic field: the consumer's finish

At the personal level, the advent of new electronic technologies, especially those that come into contact with our bodies, opens a breach in the subject by injecting several doses of techno-social otherness. Indeed, it is an invitation – an initiation – to lose oneself in the other and to find a new balance with all that surrounds us. It is a bursting of the being, its flight towards the elsewhere, its invasion by the elsewhere. In short, as human beings, we are no longer the center of the world, nor at the center of the world...

What disappears is, in short, what can be summarized by the notion of "aura"; and it can be said that what disappears in the age of technical reproducibility is the "aura" of the work of art. The process is symptomatic, its meaning goes beyond the artistic field. (Benjamin, 2000, p. 23)

In this passage is inscribed the most effective and prophetic interpretation of the social meaning of a fact, the reproducibility of the work, apparently only technical but in reality fundamental in relation to the future of aesthetic forms, of mass society and its systems of power-knowledge. The disappearance of the aura of the work of art indicates that the object external to the social body, coming from an afterlife that is somehow magical and transcends the *hic et nunc*, undergoes a relativization that empties it of its ability to seduce and bewitch the public. By losing its moral authority, the artistic universe deprives its political referent, the system that presides over it, of its symbolic power. If it is true that modern democracy is based on the correspondence between law and customs (Durkheim, 2002), which in turn is fueled by the symbolic adherence of the social body to the elites, it is clear that today this link has been interrupted exactly to the extent that the everyday is, what was below no longer shimmers in the aesthetic forms coming from above but in itself and in all its techno-social extensions, from digital networks to street art, from rap to funk and techno through cosplay, role-playing and street parties.

Traditions legitimized and consolidated in the course of modernity, in other words its organizations, institutions and presbyteries, thus suddenly lose the aesthetic device that has allowed them to crystallize the difference between them and the street, to place themselves on the other side of the fence, this frontier that is illustrated, for example, by the distance that, in any museum, separates the work from the public. The sacred space of the museum, where the new pilgrims of society must go to redeem their ignorance and contemplate beauty, is the area of high symbolic density in which the secrecy and monopoly of power on the part of the State and its avatars are housed. Good taste and knowledge raised to supreme values, defended and distributed scientifically, are the levers through which the social body is organized with a dialectical finality between the production of knowledge and the generation of power. The museum is the sacred place, a secular sacrality, the archetype of the light and totalizing power relationship that regulates the relationship between elite and mass in the era of democracy. In its interior, the shadow line between the work and the barrier that the public can never cross acquires a special value. It is the metaphor of the imposition of the law and the rules according to which the public and the rulers, the represented and the representatives are obliged to keep different roles: the first to contemplate with reverence, the second to govern by radiating splendor and progressive destinies onto the masses. For the same reason, in any museum it is forbidden to dance, shout, eat... In short, to express the voice of the body, which must be reduced to the order of reason.

Here the artistic object must be contemplated in silence, with admiration or at least discretion, without being able to be touched or, at bottom, discussed, since everything in a museum is organized in such a way that the visitor moves in a predestined and closed frame of possible meaning. This model is, on closer inspection, the opposite of the one that is experienced through the linguistic games of horizontal and interactive communicative network platforms, where the space of pleasure, play and celebration as beauty is the result of electronic sociality and the

connective affinities that make it up. The collapse of the boundary between work and audience is slowly but inevitably leading to the confusion of the two fields. This is why what we are talking about *goes beyond the artistic field*.

The technique of reproduction, as the thing could be formulated, removes the reproduced from the realm of tradition. By multiplying reproduction, it puts a quantitative series of events in the place of a single event. And by allowing the production to come to meet the one who enjoys it in his particular situation, it updates the product. Both processes lead to a violent upheaval that invests what is transmitted – an upheaval of tradition, which is the other side of the current crisis and the current renewal of humanity. They are closely linked to the mass movements of our time. (Benjamin, 2000, p. 23)

The masses, the great remnant of modernity – subject both created and feared by the instituted order – are recklessly endowed with an instrument that gives them the possibility of implementing their own disproportionate "quantities" of new "qualities", to the disadvantage of the guardians of power. What is "reproduced" is separated from the producer and his circle of faithful performers, but is also displaced from the stage – the museum and its corollaries – which had endowed it with its magic and supremacy. The actualization of any product in question thus becomes the antechamber of a sensibility that is irreconcilable with the strategies of the producers. It takes place discreetly against a backdrop of generalized distraction, leisure or fantasy. In this case, the work is adapted and appropriated within the daily life in order to make it aesthetic, to make it pleasant and "pretty". In the end, it ends up being definitively diverted when the poetic inhabiting – the poetics of the everyday – prevails over the instances of art and over artistic forms. In this sense, pop art, urban aesthetics and the cultural industry are only the beginnings of the public's becoming a work of art and its ordinary life triggered by Instagram's stories, selfies and snaps. According to Marx (1980), the act of consumption is the final phase of production, the consumer's finish being the way in which the merchandise comes to life as part of everyday life. It is, in a way, its continuation, its re-creation, the work of which the social body is the true artist – to use other words. We are thus facing – better yet, we are immersed in – the final and decisive finish of the consumer, where it becomes a work of art. This final outcome also reveals a fatality. Referring to the accomplishment of a process, it does not only announce the death of the art evoked by Hegel (1944), but also that of the public.

This kind of performance, before its ultimate completion, takes on a violent tone when the "masses" implement it against the meaning in which the original work was conceived. Destructive violence is thus the dark face of consumerism, and Benjamin (2000) distinguishes from the outset its potentially subversive qualities, precisely where the work is welcomed into the tumultuous bosom of a daily life irreducible to any order that is not his own, according to the law of the brothers. The upheaval of tradition is then the corollary of the emergence of practices rooted in an archaic past and at the same time touched by futuristic visions. So for Benjamin, the return of culture to a sort of trivial return has immediately to do with a general destruction of what is given and what has been sedimented by knowledge, by powers and by institutions. The fundamental quality of the means of mass communication, the one that has often escaped those who have shaped and elaborated them for political or commercial purposes, is thus grasped: it remains in its capacity to enter into synergy with the social body and become its ambiance, its territory, its landscape, mediascape integrating the bodyscape.

The media landscape

The social body expands in a scenario that allows it to satisfy a series of desires immediately associated with a general renewal of its existence, bringing back into discussion the traditions and canons long sedimented in our societies. Here the media play the role of powerful spaces of communion: they actualize the being-together, corroborate the community and sacrifice everything

it no longer needs or wants to be there. In a particular way, the most significant challenge in any age is for the newest *medium*, the one that is capable of guaranteeing the balance between the continuation and renewal of social forms. At the time when Benjamin (2000) writes, there is an extraordinary vector of the conscious and unconscious intentions of the masses: "their most powerful agent is cinema. Its social significance, even in its most positive form, or even precisely in this one, is unthinkable without its destructive, cathartic form: the liquidation of the traditional value of cultural heritage" (p. 23).

As far as our research is concerned, we consider this point to be fundamental although it is neglected by almost all interpreters of Benjamin's thought and, in general, by most communication mediologists and sociologists. Durand (1996) is in this respect a happy exception, since he succeeds in identifying the extent to which the invasion of markets and minds on the part of technical paraphernalia and media images acts surreptitiously towards an underground production of "perverse effects", directed against the very producers of communications and objects manipulated by the social body. The author achieves this mainly thanks to the choice to take into consideration the dimension of the imaginary, before and even more than the discourse on the instruments or on the functions of the media. Indeed, in this invisible but sensitive realm, behind every mass consumption there is also destruction, *the liquidation of the traditional value of cultural heritage* in the name of an older tradition and a present without any other purpose for those who inhabit it that is not the being there, here and now.

From the moment a friction between the masses and the aesthetic universe begins to manifest itself, when the latter ceases to be an object to be contemplated from a distance and with reverence, while the work of art approaches the person, the masses inaugurate a process of appropriation of the world of objects and images that leads them to become ever more greedy, in a way to become fatter, according to a paradigm close to obesity and obscenity in Baudrillard (2000). There is a kind of will to power of the social body due to the proximity established between daily life, images and the system of objects. To fully grasp this dynamic, we must explore in its roots and surfaces the

social conditioning of the current decadence of the aura. It is based on two circumstances, both related to the ever-increasing importance of the masses in current life. And that is to say: to make things, spatially and humanly, closer is for the present masses a very lively demand, as much as the tendency to overcome the unity of any element whatsoever by the reception of its reproduction. (Benjamin, 2000, p. 24)

Modernity, in fact, has played on a general distancing from things and from others, according to a logic of separation. By betting on abstraction and the universal, it has oriented its projects towards distant objectives, valid for everything in everyone and everywhere, which require the sacrifice of enjoyment, of the present. Conversely, the contemporary culture we are exploring invests in what is close and in close contact with both the sensible and the imaginary. On closer inspection, the technical reproducibility of the work of art is a fundamental process that has supported this paradigm shift, which has been actualized since the second half of the 19th century.

The authenticity of the work is the equivalent of the unity and separation of the individual, of his or her distance from others and the world. From the moment these principles crumble, all the identity, economic and political cages of the modern world seem to be in crisis (Martins, 2015). For the subject, making things closer means drawing them to oneself, making them one's own and, at the same time, translating what is authentic and unique into something reproducible and common. The bourgeois subject is to the authentic and distant aesthetic product what the masses are to the aestheticization of existence and the absorption of what surrounds them. "The unity of the work of art is identified with its integration in the context of tradition" (Benjamin, 2000, p. 25), while its reproducibility and betrayal are the measure of the gap between everyday life and tradition itself.

This redefinition undermines the condition of modern man, his sensory balance, his relationship with what is inside and outside him, and even his point of view. That which belongs to the visual order and which is capable of establishing a difference-distanciation between the individual and his otherness, gives way to the re-emergence of the tactile character of experience (McLuhan, 1977), when touch – touching and being touched – becomes the carrying axis of daily life, the mark of sociality beyond and below sex. The caresses that characterize our relationship with tablets and smartphones, Tinder's swipes, shares and emojis, in this sense, are only metaphors for a generalized, emphatic approach to the other, through an interaction based on feeling and emotion more than on seeing and abstraction. Benjamin (2000), thanks to his ability to understand the media, surfaces and phantasmagorias of his time, was the first to glimpse this crucial passage: "every day, the demand to take possession of the object at the closest possible distance in the image, or better yet in the effigy, in the reproduction, becomes more and more indisputable" (p. 25).

The image is thus invested with the delicate mission of reconnecting the social body to what it has previously been separated from, of fundamentally allowing an appropriation of the world that is also the beginning of its re-creation. Icons, objects, information and symbols are thus swallowed up in the bellies of ordinary life and readapted to what is current and everyday. Contrary to what is commonly written about globalization and the role played in this process by the media, the imaginary is a regime through which we take things from the world to ourselves, we activate a process of participation in which what is close enters into connection with what is far away.

In this framework, the media image is indeed a mesocosm, a device through which one conjugates oneself with the foreign and the mysterious: nature, technique, the divine. The rigid separation between the self and the other, daughter of the alphabetical culture that has shaped Western modernity, is then gradually abandoned in favor of a generalized confusion, a interpenetration reminiscent of holism, a participation that evokes technomagy more than technology (Susca, 2011). It is no coincidence that the key words of digital cultures are "interaction", "immersion", "connection", all of which are signs of communion, confusion, and matrix order (Susca, 2016). Therefore, we understand better why, while being more and more dependent on the technical environment, we are also getting closer to nature. The return of bio, deep ecology (Drengson & Inoue, 1995), the vegan order (Celka, 2018), selective sorting, green vacations, sustainable economy (Combes, 2010) and the ethics of degrowth (Latouche, 2006) appear then as symptoms of a new conjunction between human beings and the environment that they have long considered an object to be conquered, occupied and manipulated as they wish (Maffesoli, 2017). On the contrary, the fabric that connects us to the technical universe is the same one that we now associate with "Mother Earth". In either case, the subject takes a step backwards in relation to what surrounds it, but it is a dance step. It ends up depending on it in the same way that we depend on the person leading the dance. This is one of the axes of post-humanism that signals the crisis of anthropocentrism. There is also a sacrifice of the human, because the confusion in question implies losses for the individual: the renunciation of self and self.

The aura of daily life

The function of art, and in particular of the ritual moment of its enjoyment, has been, at least since the Renaissance, that of translating and dislocating the feelings and sensations induced by the contemplation of the work towards the symbolic systems of power and knowledge presiding over it: whether it be the lord, the priest or the patron, it was always a question of adhering to a higher order in daily life, in the name of beauty, and whose superiority was made a vector, source and guarantee. Consequently, this aesthetic correspondence served to legitimize the moral and political supremacy of the instituted power over ordinary life. The image is thus the link between the public, the mass – or even before that, the "rabble" – and the body of the sovereign, which from the light of the former draws the vital lymph to corroborate its status. The individually experienced ecstasy in front of the unique and authentic object, austere and pompously exhibited in the museum, thus

becomes one with the approval of an instituted order and with the inscription in the framework of an imagined social community, the one that serves as the identity pretext for Leviathan (Anderson, 1996).

The rite of admiration of a work is the lever that confirms and reinforces the myth on which the established order is based and slowly renews itself. The distinction between the sacred and the profane is the archetypal matrix on which the separation between instituted and instituent power is also oriented during modernity, between the beautiful forms of the one who governs and the lower, banal forms experienced in everyday life. If the former maintain a sacredness that makes them transcendent, foundational and emblematic, the space of everyday life naturally becomes the margin of those who govern, an offshoot of power - the mirror of politics. The ritual of contemplation then becomes part of tradition, satisfying the permanence of its guardians and dissipating in their bodies the energies agitated in aesthetic emotion.

The original mode of articulation of the work of art in the context of tradition found its expression in worship. The oldest works of art were born (...) in the service of a ritual, first magical, then religious. (...) The unique value of the *authentic* work of art finds its foundation in ritual, in the context where it had its first original use value (...) the technical reproducibility of the work of art, for the first time in the history of the world, emancipates it from its parasitic existence in the context of ritual. The reproduced work of art becomes to an ever greater extent the reproduction of a work of art predisposed to reproducibility. (Benjamin, 2000, p. 26)

The ritual from which the work of art originates as expression and *medium* is actually reconfigured, not extinguished, by the process of reproducibility. Benjamin, when he writes, has a glorious, traditional and transcendent image of ritual in mind: he thinks of ancient forms of religion (Obadia, 2012), in which aesthetic pleasure and emotional involvement are pretexts for the public to adhere to an ethical and symbolic system, interpreting the role of the faithful spectator. The technical reproducibility of the work of art, on the other hand, inaugurates the slow but gradual shift of the faculty of orienting meaning, communications and imaginations from top to bottom, from the center to the periphery of collective life, in its horizontal frames, according to elective and then connective tastes, lifestyles and affinities. She gradually translates the public into artist and at the same time into work, subject of re-creation and object of contemplation, manipulation and consumption.

In this context, rituals change form. The "pilgrimage" in the classical cathedrals of culture, as Benjamin's (2000) favourite word put it, has not disappeared but is transfigured under the impulse of emotional architectures based on spectacle, merchandise and leisure. In this sense, museums are reconfigured into stunning and entertaining devices with bars, cafés, multimedia spaces and *souvenir* stores, which are increasingly becoming their true high places. In a way, the tourist or visitor no longer really goes there to contemplate the unique and authentic work, but to experience a moment of sociality or conviviality. If in the past, moreover, museum gadgets and *souvenirs* were traces used to remind the spectator of the artistic experience lived, today they are real fetishes. *Exit through the gift shop* (Banksy, 2010), Banksy's mockumentary on street art and the miseries of contemporary art, was aimed precisely at highlighting the commercial and ephemeral dimension of the sector. Indeed, when visiting museums, especially those of the new generation, one must not only notice the hyper presence of gift shops at the exit, but also their centrality, often even at the entrance of these places.

The *souvenir* is no longer strictly speaking a simple memory but the very work that the tourist, fan and spectator desires most, the one that will accompany him at home and that will allow him to aestheticize his daily life, by giving it an aura. The aura of everyday life. This is the penultimate step in the process described by Benjamin (2000) as the absorption of art into the belly of the public, the last one being the becoming of the public's work and even its becoming a memory, thing and gadget, as happens with social network profiles, Instagram photos, memoji, stickers, memes,

gifs and any other electronic reification of individuals online. This takes place in the context of new rituals that certainly have nothing to do with the queues for access to the Louvre or the Vatican Museum and do not respond to the canons of art textbooks. However, in the mania for selfies and in the deployment of <3 online, in the elaboration of stories, in the editing of memes, up to the staging of an aestheticized intimacy on Snapchat, through the careful choice of Facebook profile photos, we are forced to note the advent and proliferation of symbolically dense societal practices, causes and effects of emotions, ceremonies and communions. They are no longer addressed to overhanging altars, in the name of universal and abstract truths - the great narratives - but rather focus on the effervescence of that which is close and everyday, having to do with the order of peers: connective affinities, being together without end. Daily life thus becomes, for better or for worse, according to a spirit that evokes the wild sacredness dear to Bastide (1997), an open-air museum whose "revolt is the very pleasure, and this is also what is at stake in every thought" (Bataille, 2010, p. 120). We can therefore conclude that in the epoch of its widespread diffusion, art fades into everyday life. Ordinary life thus becomes an aesthetic object and subject. This is no longer the quarter of an hour of fame predicted by Andy Warhol during the golden age of pop art, but a real "becoming art of the public". The challenge to come is to understand what it is: is it still legitimate to talk about art and subjects in such a scenario?

Biographical note

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