



Brushstrokes shaping a sustainable future



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PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

Art and sustainable development are two domains that, when carefully examined alongside and in connection with each other, reveal their deep interweaving. In fact, art and artistic activities can play an effective role in advancing the objectives of sustainable development programs for human societies by creating motivation and awareness, stirring up emotions in audiences, and conveying direct and indirect messages through the form and content of works. When art is actively engaged in purposeful efforts to interact with sustainable development, it can also be referred to as "sustainable art."

Eco-friendly art encompasses those activities, works, and artistic actions that responsibly take into account all the policies and requirements of sustainable development, from the most elementary stages including ideation, creativity, design, execution, and so forth, to public exhibition, information dissemination, sales, installation, and maintenance of works, and remain committed to observing its principles. These policies primarily include social responsibilities and environmental protection programs that ensure green art, in the course of its growth and development, consistently seeks to bring about positive social changes while leaving the minimal negative impact on the environment.

From an environmental perspective, environmental art pays special attention to the level of pollution left behind from artistic activities (from creation to exhibition and beyond), the amount of energy, water, and other necessary consumable resources used, the volume of carbon dioxide produced as a result of artistic activities (carbon footprint), and from a social responsibility perspective, to social, cultural, behavioral, psychological impacts and other occurrences and effects that art might trigger, and strives to manage them.

In what follows, we will examine and study the various ways in which art plays a role in the sustainable development of human societies.

1. Message transmission and appropriate content delivery by sustainable art

Art transmits appropriate messages through the content of works and visual forms, influences emotions, creates motivation and movement in audiences, and increases their awareness regarding the subject matter of the works. In fact, art in this context can convey specific messages within the framework of sustainable development policies, either by highlighting its positive aspects or calling attention to the negative consequences of neglecting it, by establishing connections with audiences through emotion and through the pathway of aesthetics.

Message conveyance in each artistic discipline occurs according to the nature



and specific methods of that artistic field. For example, in painting and photography, message transmission takes place through presenting visual content such as showcasing the beauties of nature or depicting the destructive impacts of humans and their activities on the environment, climate change, and so forth. Other examples include music and the creation of pieces for specific cultural and social occasions or purposes, theater with direct and indirect approaches to conveying various messages, cinema with its vast audiences as one of the most efficient artistic disciplines for influencing the general public, or disciplines like installation and performance with their special capability in display and execution, conveying specific discourse in line with each aspect of sustainable development policies.

2. Media, materials, and tools in green art

Artists, when creating artistic works according to their artistic discipline and intended works, use various materials, media, and tools such as different types of paint, canvas, paper and cardboard, metals, wood, glass, fabric and fibers, solvents and various chemical materials, and so forth. Given contemporary modern approaches in defining art and artistic works, today there are virtually no limitations on the types of media, materials, and tools used by artists in creating artistic works. In this regard, earth-conscious art operates based on three approaches.

First, using materials that cause the least harm to the environment and in whose production and distribution, sustainable development principles and policies have been observed as much as possible.

Second, using recycled materials that have returned to the cycle of production and use. It should be noted that it is preferable that what is used in creating and crafting artistic works, if it does not require long-term or permanent durability, should itself be recyclable and reusable in various cycles of human activities.

And third, consumption management, or in other words, responsible consumption of raw materials and energy. In this same context, we can mention artists who directly work with waste and refuse (scrap) to create artistic works. These works, in addition to consuming and converting waste into artistic works and creating artistic, cultural, and economic value, draw the audience's attention to waste as one of the major issues of sustainable development in human society.



3. Green art approaches in creation, exhibition, and performance

Eco-friendly art practically pays special attention to all the impacts of these processes on human societies and the environment and their management throughout all stages of study, ideation, creation, execution, exhibition, sales, and collection of artistic works and performances. These impacts can include environmental pollution, sending messages contrary to the cultural and ethical values of society, destructive effects on audiences' psyche, creating social disorders during exhibitions and performances such as road blockages and programs outside conventional hours, and so forth. In these executive and practical stages, considering the efficiency and effectiveness of artistic executive programs is of particular importance.

4. Social impacts

Green art helps achieve sustainable development goals from two perspectives: Social interaction and social empowerment.

Among the matters that are always under special attention of sustainable art



is the expansion of social interactions at various levels and dimensions, from within a society to interaction between different societies. Green art always strives to connect with individuals from various societies and involve and activate them in artistic and cultural activities. In this way, sustainable art and its target human societies have mutual influence on each other, which leads to the growth and development of both sides and creates a sense of belonging and unity between the audience and art and artist.

Furthermore, responsible art can be one of the effective tools for social empowerment and positive changes in it. In fact, art in this role is capable of becoming the voice of the unseen or marginalized segments of society and, as a medium for expressing the demands of societies and groups, serving the expansion and extension of social justice.

5. Green art, problem-solving, and creative thinking

Problem-solving and creative thinking are important and fundamental processes in sustainable development policymaking for human societies, especially when managing challenges and needing novel management solutions for upcoming issues. Sustainable art can have a significant positive impact on the growth and development of these two processes at the societal level by extending and generalizing creativity techniques and creative innovation to other ongoing human activities in human societies.

6. Thinking out of the box

Generally, art in all disciplines emphasizes gaining practical experience, discovery, thinking, contemplation, and the endless and unlimited journey of human thought around various issues and content. This approach, which can also be referred to as thinking out of the box, holds considerable importance in sustainable development and its strategies and policies, and thus by growing, developing, and strengthening it, practically helps achieve sustainable development goals.

7. Low-impact art and economics

One of the prominent characteristics of sustainable development is the necessity for growth and development of human societies from various aspects in an integrated and proportionate manner. Economics is among the most important of these aspects. Responsible art can create new economic opportunities by emphasizing programs formu-

lated based on art economics principles, relying on cultural and artistic activities and businesses related to them. These programs include selling various artistic works and products in domestic and international markets, organizing various domestic and international artistic events such as biennials, developing the tourism industry, helping grow ancillary industries and services dependent on art and artistic activities, and so forth.

In this section, it is necessary to mention the role of art in creating and developing art tourism and its prominent role in helping economic development in direct and indirect ways.

8. Cultural heritage preservation

Responsible art can play a prominent role in protecting cultural heritage, which is one of the fundamental principles of sustainable development. This duty is generally carried out by selecting appropriate content, conveying targeted messages, and introducing national heritage through artistic works and performances.

In addition, organizing managed artistic events in historical and cultural locations or for related occasions is also among the useful and appropriate ways to help preserve and protect cultural heritage and create awareness and motivation in this regard.

9. Creating suitable living environment and reducing social harms

One of the goals of sustainable development is creating a suitable environment for human life in human societies and minimizing social harms. Green art, by fulfilling its purposeful mission, contributes to the growth and elevation of general cultural level and social awareness, stress reduction in individuals, creating psychological and spiritual tranquility and beauty in the living environment, and furthermore, it takes up part of the surplus and leisure time of audiences, especially the younger generation, and focuses them on related activities, thereby reducing the chance of them turning to activities that contradict the moral or cultural values of society or have a criminal nature. The mentioned functions of waste-conscious art constitute an effective step in creating a suitable environment for the life of society members and reducing social harms.

10. Art therapy

Sustainable art, with special attention to all useful approaches and functions of art for human societies, also pays special attention to art therapy. Art therapy is a psychotherapeutic method that employs the artistic creativity process to improve and enhance individuals' physical, emotional, and spiritual health levels.

Art therapy strengthens individuals' capabilities in society, expands social communications, helps manage individual and social crises, elevates cultural levels and relationships, and by playing these roles, helps achieve the goals of sustainable development policies for human societies.

