



The Power of Political Art

Arts - Module 1

The arts

Abstract

What role does art play in exercising political power and influencing the actions of large multinationals? How can it be used to comment on environmental issues like plastic pollution? This module is about the power of political art. First, we explore the definitions and key examples of political art and power. Subsequently, the main types of political propaganda and political protest art are discussed, identifying defining characteristics and discussing in what ways art can exert power through various examples. Finally, we examine how individuals or groups exert power and influence on larger scales through political art in the context of climate change and plastic pollution, concluding with a practical exercise with recycled materials.

Key Concepts

- i. Political Art
- ii. Power
- iii. Propaganda
- iv. Protest art

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the module, students are able to:

- i. Provide definitions for political art, propaganda, protest art and power.
- ii. Recognise the defining characteristics of political art, propaganda and protest art
- iii. List, discuss, and analyse how art can exert power through two types of political art: propaganda & political protest art
- iv. Apply how political art could be used / is being used to address plastic pollution
- v. Create their own propaganda poster for plastic pollution

Glossary

Term	Definition
Political Art	Political art is used to express political opinions. Political art can take many forms, but one thing all types of political art have in common is that they address societal issues. The purpose of this is usually either to convince people of a certain point, or to create awareness.
Power	Power is a complex concept, which refers to the ability of an actor to either act or to produce an effect by being in possession of control, authority and influence over others.
Propaganda	Propaganda is art that is used by the government in order to sway its citizens into supporting a particular cause or to take certain action.
Protest Art	Protest art is art used by citizens in order to criticize the government or other parties, such as large multinationals.