

Crawford College of Art & Design

The importance of soft sculpture and immersive/ installation art through the evolution of modern fine art.

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Introduction

Soft sculptures are three-dimensional works made using pliable materials such as fabric, leather, string, wool, rope, and many more industrial materials. Immersive art is the creation of a world around a person in a way that makes them feel part of and inside of it. I am very interested in these areas of contemporary art as they are some of the most modern art styles/ processes in the current art world. The thesis examines the artists different approaches to soft sculpture and immersive/ installation art, it also examines what makes these artworks unique and what makes them significant in today's art world.

My three chosen artists are Yayoi Kusama a Japanese artist born 1929, Claes Oldenburg a Swedish artist born 1929 also and Ernesto Neto a Brazilian artist born 1964.

In this thesis I write about the individual artists uses and implementations of both soft sculpture and fully immersive work. I point out connections between the artists techniques, common inspirations, and motivations. These are relevant as they are areas that incorporate all three of the artists and link them together through different historical points in time.

In Chapter One I will discuss soft sculpture and its importance and metamorphosis into being incorporated into contemporary fine art. I will also talk about the different three artists that produce different affects through soft sculpture when it comes to being viewed and experienced.

In Chapter Two I will talk about what installation/ immersive art is and the different kinds of experiences you can achieve through this approach to art. As well as looking into how artists have tackled the concept of immersive/ installation art.

And finally, in Chapter 3 I will examine 3 specific artists that utilize both soft sculpture and immersive/installation art in their works. I will talk about the viewers reflections on these artists works and how they are personally affected by the experiences.

For this thesis I got my information from an accumulation of books, interviews, website write ups, critiques, and historical records. I won't write from a fully personal perspective so that the reader can form their own opinion on the material I present. Though my opinion on whether these artworks are included in my view of a major progression in art which is the changing of material and the limits of that art can be.

Chapter 1

Soft sculpture hasn't been around very long in the grand scheme of fine art. Its first noted appearances started in the ¹1960s in New York with Yayoi Kusama's penis chair and Claes Oldenburg's floor cake. Soft sculpture even in the beginning was quite shocking as people were used to smooth polished sculptures that were to be viewed from a distance and simply admired for their perfect and depictions of things people have seen before. When it comes to soft sculpture it is possible to depict everyday objects well as shown by Oldenburg with his renditions of softened objects such as floor burger which was displayed with floor cake. Yayoi Kusama's interpretation of soft sculpture resembles her repetitive motifs she showed in her paintings and collages. Her motivations for creating soft sculpture were completely different to Oldenburg and Neto which I believe created the extreme soft sculpture accumulations she made. ²Neto's origins for soft sculpture are even more extreme as he completely disregards trying to make something that looks like anything we know.



¹ Infinity Net, by Yayoi Kusama published by Tate publishing 2011

² <http://www.artnet.com/artists/ernesto-neto/>

³Netos Humanoid and ovaloid sculptures are excellent examples of soft sculpture that is just so far away from what sculpture used to be before materials became available in abundance and fine art evolved into something a lot more approachable than before.

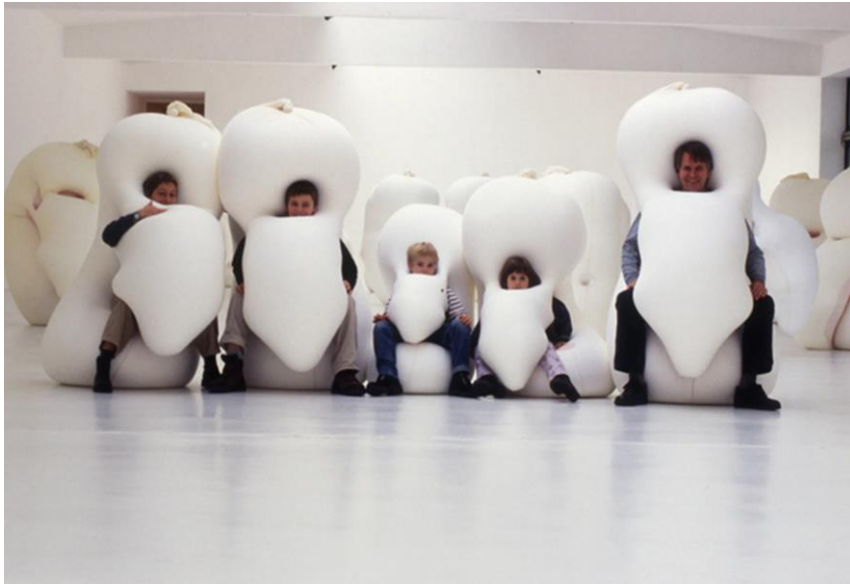


Fig 2



Fig 3

³ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/ernesto-neto/>

⁴These pieces caused quite the fuss as both artists wanted to be the first to have started soft sculpture. Claes Oldenburg's wife did apologize to Yayoi Kusama during Claes' first show presenting his soft sculpture, leading me and many others to believe that Claes stole the idea from Kusama leading to a bit of a rift between the two artists. Both has quite different ideas of soft sculpture so it's hard to truly know. Soft sculpture from this point became more and more noticeable and talked about within the contemporary world.⁵ Oldenburg's soft sculptures were described as ghosts and soft versions of the original object. Examples being 'giant soft fan' and 'giant soft fan, ghost version.



Figs 4 & 5

⁶Art has been around as long as man, constantly improving and evolving right alongside each other throughout the years. Art started as simple representative drawings and carvings but soon started to evolve into something beautiful. It was all over the world and this form of expression became extremely popular amongst nearly every kind of human on earth.

⁴ Infinity Net by Yayoi Kusama Tate Publishing 2011

⁵ "Claes Oldenburg" by Arthur Solway, Thomas Lawson, Claes Oldenburg

⁶ <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2015/01/origins-of-art/>

⁷Examples being Newgrange stone carvings in Ireland, Egyptian hieroglyphics, paintings and sculpture, Aboriginal art in Australia... the list goes on. The renaissance around 1300 brought three dimensionality and extremely fine detail to paintings and sculpture. One thing that was never attempted though, in all the time people have been creating art.⁸ Up until 1960, apart from in toys and pillows no-one was to create their sculptures from soft materials and exhibiting it. People weren't interested in giving a textural interactive piece, they wanted to view art, but not feel art physically. Artists restricted themselves to a canvas or standing sculpture for practical reasons, who would buy a room which fully submerges you in a new world or a giant soft sculpture that would take up anyone's whole house and be seen as a waste of material before 1900. There was also a fear of breaking the norms due to the fact if no one bought your work you would likely starve and must seek other laborious outdoors work. This isn't as big of a concern in the current day as people tend not to die at such a young age and tend not to die from starvation on the streets. Artists today are surrounded by an abundance of cheap, often free, high quality and complex materials that allow us to create extremely interesting and very different art from the past. This is a large reason for the creation of soft sculpture. Yayoi Kusama's penis chair shows through its materials this point exactly. The couch is an old discarded one found on the New York streets along with the many socks which Kusama stuffed with rags and sewed to the chair all over to create a textural seat that is irresistible to sit on. She calls these kinds of Penile sculptures, accumulations. A theme seen in the majority of her work, such as covering surfaces in dried macaroni, large misshapen objects resembling penises and overwhelming net and dot patterns. Curators have said that they must try very hard to not let people sit on the penis

⁷ <https://www.newgrange.com/>

⁸ I make this statement and give the following information about the beginnings of soft sculpture from a large accumulation of research on the subject of the origins of soft sculpture. All listed in the bibliography.

chair anymore as it's so worn out from the past 50 years of people's bottoms during exhibits. Showing the allure that the audience feels to full experience the art piece.

A thing that comes hand in hand with Ernesto Neto, Yayoi Kusama and Claes Oldenburg's early soft sculptures is the importance of audience interaction with the art works.⁹ During Oldenburg's the street, people walked on the sculptures littering the floor, which brought the piece to life as it was interacted with and felt as a real street.¹⁰ The fact that all the materials used, (in this case mostly cardboard) are easily mailable and already dirty from the ink and charcoal Oldenburg drew on them with, this makes the impact of the viewers feet, physically shape the sculpture which is the street. This means that the viewing and participation in this 'soft' and immersive sculpture continues to mould the sculpture into an ever-changing version of itself.¹¹ The same goes for Yayoi Kusama's penis chairs, and other accumulations she has created, as the sculpture has so much more meaning when it has the imprints of curious humans who had to experience the tactile features of the sculptures.¹² Ernesto Neto's works are extremely heavy on the viewer experience as he uses so many natural spices and herbs and many other earthly materials hung in stretchy nets in beautifully co-ordinated patterned, mostly hanging sculptures. He has said that 'I want people to see my sculptures through their pores, as well as their eyes, to feel it with all their senses'. It was in 1996 that Neto began to stuff his nylon nets with plastic balls and many spices and different materials.¹³ By 2010 Neto had created his first extremely large piece called the edges of the world in the hayward gallery. This piece incorporated his fabric stalactites and long sprawling rooms of stretchy nylon fabric. This all lead to an outdoor crocheted swimming pool in which participants of Neto's show could experience yet another sense that is sometimes forgotten.

⁹ "Claes Oldenburg" by Arthur Solway, Thomas Lawson, Claes Oldenburg

¹⁰ Claes Oldenburg- October files 13

¹¹ <https://www.kusamadocumentary.com/> (examined the documentary)

¹² Fiber: Sculpture 1960- present by Jenelle Porter

¹³ <https://www.dezeen.com/2010/07/05/the-edges-of-the-world-by-ernesto-neto/>

Fig 6 & 7



Ernesto Neto is a much younger artist than Kusama and Oldenburg.¹⁴ He started his art career with soft sculpture and continues it today. This shows a quick evolution in the art world, as artists began to change from the usual flat canvas painters of the past, showing that you do not need to be skilled in all areas of art to create new and exciting never before seen art. Neto's art relies heavily on the viewer interaction as he incorporates, smell, touch and vision into each art piece. He suspends different herbs and spices and materials in stretchy materials that can be poked and smelt and experiences, even sat on in some pieces. A big difference between Neto's work compared to Kusama and Oldenburg's is that Neto creates almost labyrinths with his work that the viewer travels through and experiences the different feels and smells, connecting yourself with the piece. Neto calls his viewers of his shows participants as he feels they are there to feel and experience all his works through their many senses, instead of simply viewing the artworks.

¹⁴ <https://vimeo.com/search?q=ernesto%20neto>

¹⁵Yayoi Kusama sets herself apart from Neto and Oldenburg by her single journey into the film world with her short film Kusama self-obliteration in which she hired Jud Yalkut to film her in her sculptures and during her happenings. The film brings to life Kusama's idea of being able to remove the self from this world by observing, creating, and losing one's self in the repetitive dots that make up this world. As she calls it to self-Obliterate. She relates to Neto in the way they both find solace in natural forms. Neto's large organic sculptures reflect Kusama's original net paintings. Particularly Neto's Esqueleto Glóbulos, a large sprawling, smooth white net.

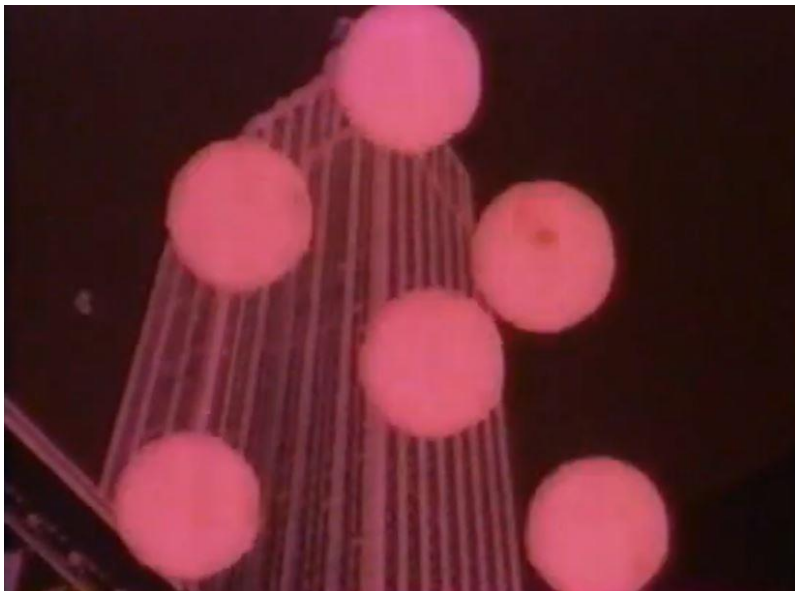


Fig 8

With Kusama's net painting you get a large view of all the net and holes coming together to create this giant natural composition. Then Neto's large installation shows the natural net form in detail. Its smooth, flowing shape is a beautiful example of textile skills and ability to create something natural that would be otherwise almost impossible to imagine in 3D. Neto has said he is an advocate for simplicity and more subtle messaging in art. This is shown in Neto's Esqueleto Glóbulos as so much is said about the meaning of the flowing shape of the

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fb2P8DwbxTM> film -Kusamas self Obliteration

sculpture. Until I found Neto's work, I didn't think it would be possible to create such a simple yet large sculpture that resembles Kusama's infinity net painting so well.



Fig 9



Fig 10

¹⁶Kusama said that her intention with Obsessional Monochrome was to show her desire to predict and measure the infinity of the unbounded universe, from her own position in it, with dots- an accumulation of particles forming the negative spaces in the net. These paintings didn't do well with a standard crowd, but Donald Judd described the, as very advanced in concept. This being a very impressive comment to receive in such an early career from such a noteworthy artist like Judd. Judd saw the passion and obsession inside Kusama through her paintings. This thrilled Kusama and drove her to continue with her project to show the world the infinite patterns that make up the world and have been showing themselves to her since a young child through hallucinations. Kusama achieve the effect of movement through her show 'Driving Image Show' in 1964 in castellano gallery in New York. ¹⁷A critic noted the room seemed to buzz and shimmer, he said 'separate distinguishable things tended to dissolve in their all over texture.' This is an incredible feat to achieve without video work, showing how one can achieve incredible effects through the use of soft sculpture and immersive art.



Fig 11

¹⁶ Infinity Net – Yayoi Kusamas autobiography 2011

¹⁷ Yayoi Kusama by Phaidon



Fig 12

Claes Oldenburg takes a different approach to soft sculpture, a more classical white cube view in which his individual giant soft pieces are placed in centre view of a room so they can be walked around and admired. Oldenburg's giant soft sculptures are made to resemble exact soft versions of the object in mind. ¹⁸In Oldenburg's show 'Exhibition of recent works by claes Oldenburg' in Sidney Janis Gallery April 7, 1964, Donald Judd gave his opinions of the soft pieces in an article in arts magazine 38 September 1964. He talks about how the soft functioning switches resemble nipples on a woman's breasts, he says 'their size is felt as enormous and the nipples seem most important. The switch doesn't suggest this single, profound form, as do the breasts of Lachaise's women, but it is, or nearly it. What I take from this quote by Judd, is the ability for a simple light switch to be translated into a soft version of itself then connected to a simple, beautiful, and calm sculpture, standing woman by Gaston Lachaise. Though opposite in material construction, the extensions of the soft switches is a beautiful comparison to the hard-prominent nipples of standing woman. I find this ability to

¹⁸ Claes Oldenburg- October files 13- Donald Judd writings

create new theories and connections through new medias of art works fascinating as each time a new medium is found, more art can be created through the realisations of how these medias can be examined and appreciated for their similarities yet striking differences. This has occurred a lot as new mediums like soft sculpture become more prominent.

Fig 13 & 14



Fig 15_

Chapter 2

For this chapter I will talk about what installation/ immersive art is and what kind of experience you can achieve through this kind of art. As well as looking into how artists have tackled the concept of immersive, installation art.

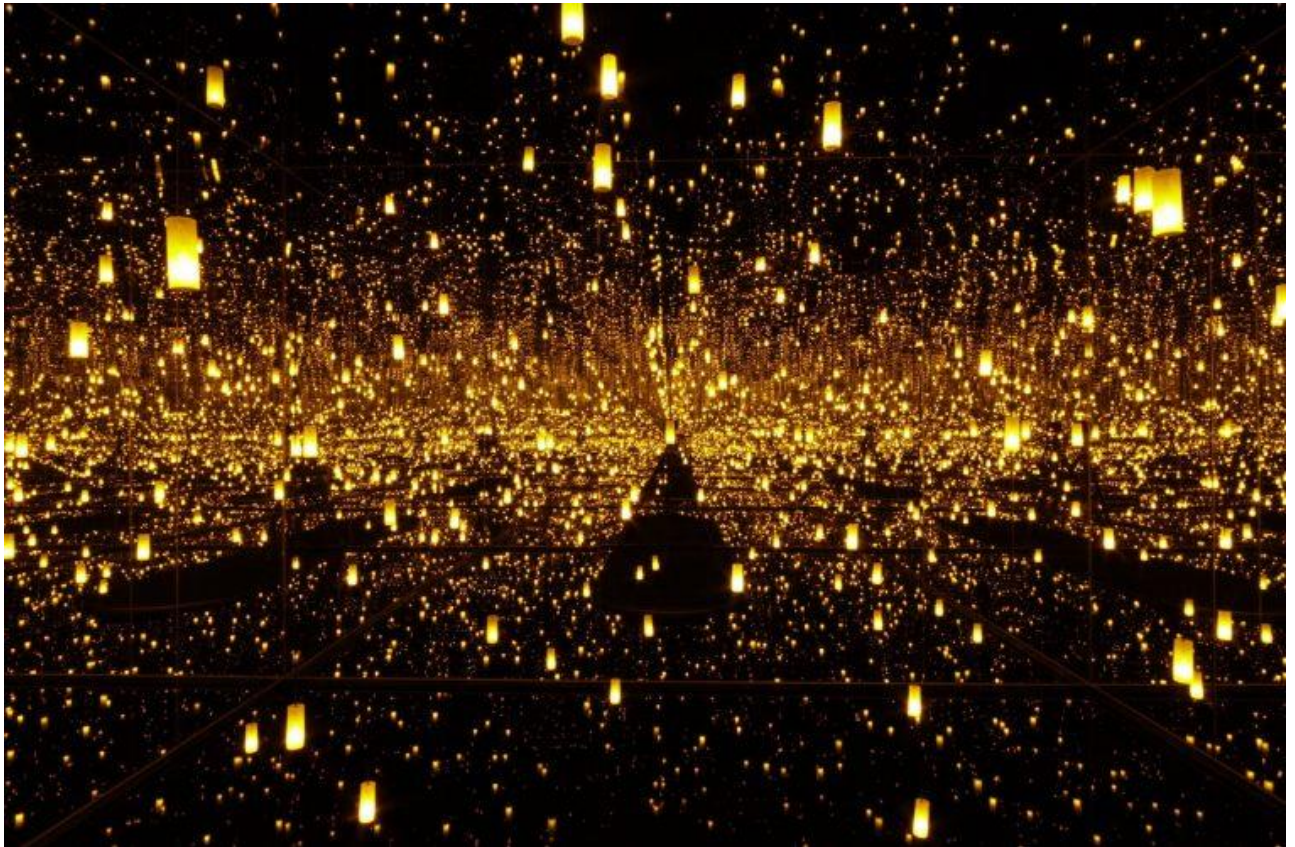
¹⁹Installation art is used to describe large-scale, mixed-media constructions, often designed for a specific place or for a temporary period, while immersive art is described as art fully surrounding the viewer and immersing them in a new world often providing a multi-sensory experience. The two terms are used in combination as I feel they fully describe the kind of art I'm talking about. This kind of art is quite new in the way it only became popular around the 1960's and is now becoming very popular today. It is possible to say that giant paintings such as in the Sistine chapel that surround the visitors with art are immersive art. But more modern things such as Yayoi Kusama's infinity rooms are in my opinion the perfect example of immersive art.



Fig 16

¹⁹ There are no exact definitions for installation art and immersive art so through my research I have giving my own definitions of what these two things actually are.

Fig 17



²⁰When a viewer attends an immersive show, they leave with a kind of feeling different to that of seeing many works in a gallery. They have more of a longing to return to that new world which they just had to leave. By fully immersing the viewer it leaves a stronger impression of the world they just experienced. In being a more interactive kind of art, you will find more people return to the gallery to experience that world once again. It's not a place that you will find in everyday life. ²¹The art piece itself almost acts as a teleportation device to that world. This is a big part that makes immersive art so unique as it can transport you to a new world much more effectively than a sculpture or painting can as it fully surrounds you with a world in a literal sense. These immersive sculptures can have a very

²⁰ Sculpture today- Judith Collins

²¹ Walking in my mind – Hayword publishing

profound impact on viewers, causing them to stay for long periods of time and get comfortable and lost in thought in these immersive sculptures.

²²Claes Oldenburg's first show 'ray gun' 1960 had a very immersive feel to it and be an attempt at fully immersive art. I say this because the location of the show was a small rented area on the lower east side of New York. The items in the show consisted of cardboard sculptures and found objects, covering every inch of the room in a scattered, rough fashion. Visitors of the show described it as 'difficult to walk around due to having to stand on the sculpture to get around'. The floor was fully covered with trash from the street and the sculptures could be made out the more you looked around. Black paint being the only colour apart from the cardboard, wood and scraps making up the sculpture. Oldenburg also performed a happening with some of his friends during the exhibition making the show much more immersive. The show reflected the state New York was in in the 1960s, the grim and hopelessness that many people felt being stuck in a rat race that was simply going downhill. The street was a refreshing and very truthful look at the people who lived in new York's own life at this time. Being fully immersed in the exaggerated sadness and decay that surrounded them daily had quite a profound effect on the people who saw it and how they may need to rethink their life goals.

²² October files – Claes Oldenburg- Yve-alain bois



Fig 18

While one of Yayoi Kusama's first fully immersive mirror room piece called love forever provided an early example of an immersive show that brings you to a totally new space that seems infinite. ²³This piece of work was noted so much that a German television representative heard about the piece and asked Kusama if she would stage a happening in her piece love forever to be broadcast on west German tv. This is an example of how important and radical installation art can be, as it can become an entire event with a cast of people inside the immersive sculpture. For the broadcast Kusama place a human sculpture inside of Love forever. A group of only men, writhing in a homoerotic, natural play of people at their most vulnerable. This art brought the viewers at the event to masturbate and eventually as the sex escalated within love forever, everyone began to cover each other in paint polka dots making the even seen to blur into the natural net and dot of the universe, the grouping having

²³ Infinity net – Yayoi Kusama Tate publishing 2011

obliterated back to the original pattern of the world that Kusama desired too hard to show the world. This entire event and even ability to do this is so extreme and beautiful, something not possible in the standard flat simple paintings or plinth sculptures most people are so accustomed too.



Fig 19

Ernesto Neto's take on immersive art is extremely large scale and extremely comfortable. His art seems to have no bounds in how it can tackle and mould to any space its needed in. A piece that I believe is his best example of immersive art is his large-scale immersive piece 'One Day We Were All Fish'.²⁴This piece was created to bring people back to nature and get them to relax and imagine what the sculpture evokes through its man patterns and shades of blue with a few complimentary oranges thrown in to achieve more depth and unity within the visual aspect of the sculpture. Neto said he wants his participants 'to get in breath, meditate and reconnect, like a vortex, to the time we all were fishes.' The sculpture is made of knitted nylon and wool scented with different herbs and spices. Participants at the exhibit are encouraged to lie down and fully relax in the beautifully cast shadows, cast by the net, very

²⁴ <https://ocula.com/art-galleries/goodman-gallery/exhibitions/one-day-we-were-all-fish-and-the-earths-belly/>

reminiscent of the reflections on the sea floor. Long tentacles resembling Neto's fabric stalactites seen in many of his other soft fabric sculptures are included in this sculpture in a much looser way. They are filled at the bottom with more herbs and spices and lay on the ground, available to be move and manipulated in any way the viewer feels to experience the installation in any way they wish.



Fig 20

Kusama's pieces can do the same evolution of the space it enters but they tend to change any space it enters, often evaporating the space around it, so all you can see is the hidden patterns around us. ²⁵Kusama's possible first immersive piece was White infinity Net which was 10 metres long and 3 meters wide. This gargantuan painting can qualify as immersive and installation art because of its presence along in any area. Though all Kusama's early work from New York seen together can make up one large immersive show, surrounding the viewer with Kusama's hypnotic motifs of infinity nets and polka dots. The sheer size of the painting also borderlines an installation piece as for it to be fully admired and most effective it would have to be the only thing in a room.

²⁵ Yayoi Kusama by Phaidon

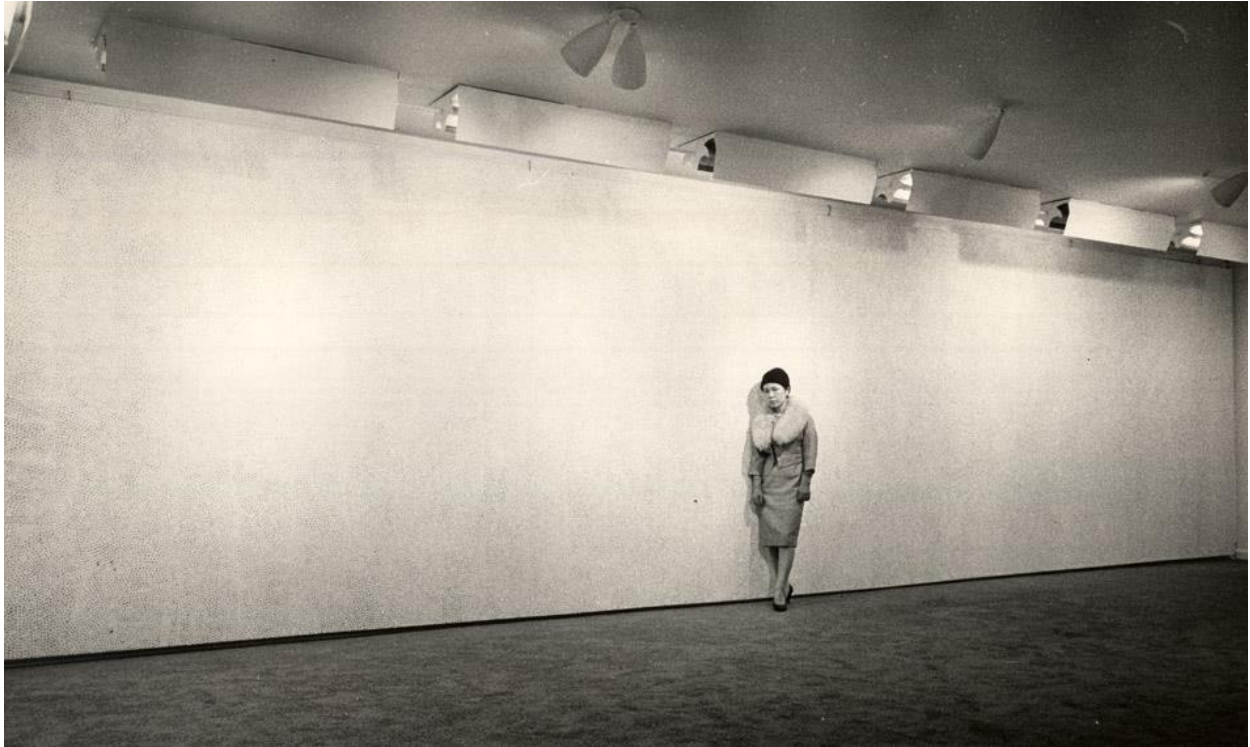


Fig 21

Chapter 3

In this chapter I will examine 3 specific artists the utilize both soft sculpture and immersive/installation art in their works (*Yayoi Kusama, Claes Oldenburg, Ernesto Neto*). I will point out connections between the artists techniques, common inspirations, and motivations. These are relevant in this thesis as they are areas that incorporate all three of the artists and joins them together through different historical points in art.

All three of these artists are strongly motivated by a desire to build a new world and expand the realms of art as we know today. ²⁶They do this by creating art unlike that of the past, therefore pushing the boundaries of what art is and can be. This is a very important aspect of

²⁶ Installation art- Claire Bishop

an artist's motivations as it's what pushes fine art to become something new and evolve. The progress of art is very important to me and many others. Progress can be seen throughout the history of art as it is constantly evolving. Immersive/installation art and soft sculpture are very significant points in the history of art as they are the first techniques that push us to fully immerse ourselves in a new world or art piece.²⁷ Another progression that's involved is the inclusion of more senses, including the sense of touch, hearing, and smell. Before most art was simply about the way it looks and how it can make you feel, but now more and more artists are venturing in the realms of different sense that can be stimulated through art. This opens so many more pathways as to what art can be. I want to show a piece of art by each of my chosen artists that are, soft sculpture, immersive art and extremely modern in both materials and desired audience interaction.

These artists are commonly motivated by personal experiences in this world that lead to a desire to escape. The technique of translating objects and rooms into something similar but different is seen in all three artists. Softening our current world and using our features of this world, slightly edited, or warped to create something new is seen also.

Through both soft sculpture and immersive art, artists can bring to life sculptures that in the past could've only been imagined through surreal paintings and sketches. Each artist has individually created unique, dreamlike sculptures that had never been created because of a lack of materials capable of such things in the past.²⁸ All three artists have shown strong knowledge and ability of working with textile materials. Oldenburg first showed his technical textile skills when he presented his first series of large scale soft sculptures which he and his wife sewed together, but some say Oldenburg's wife did most of the original work, which

²⁷ Fiber: sculpture 1960-present by Jenelle Porter

²⁸Kusama Infinity 2018 documentary
Infinity Net tate publishing 2011

was more common in the 60s as female artists were still trying to get more respect and recognition in the art world. Kusama first showed her technical textile skills when she began to sew and stuff cloth in small sections to create her first serious of soft sculptures also.

Ernesto Neto distinguishes himself between the other two artists as from the get-go he was fascinated with soft and stretchy materials to create his art. Neto shows extreme knowledge and technical skill when it comes to working with textiles, from the beginning of his career.

²⁹Ernesto Neto is a Brazilian artist born whilst both Kusama and Oldenburg were in the midst of developing their own first attempts at soft and immersive art. Neto has similar motivations to both Kusama and Oldenburg in that he wants to make an art piece that is an experience for the viewer, almost an extension of themselves. Out of the three artists, Neto's works in my opinion are the softest and lightest works as they are made of very light often transparent materials that are sewn and displayed in very complex yet natural and free flowing configurations. He is the only artist of the three that strongly incorporates smell into his sculptures. This brings a lot of life to each piece he creates as it adds another element to the art piece that expands how the viewer can feel and experience the piece. Neto also creates very large simplistic "bean bag" areas of rest in or as his pieces for the viewers to sit or lie in comfort and enjoy the feelings, views, and smells in his art piece.

²⁹ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/ernesto-neto/>



Fig 22



Fig 23

While Kusama progressed further along the immersive sometimes soft pieces, art path, while Oldenburg progressed with his soft installation sculptures, Neto went with a full combination of having very large soft sculptures completely immersing the viewer and providing a very sensual experience. Neto places a very high importance on the interaction between the viewer and the art. He greatly encourages the viewers to smell, feel and experience the art using all your senses, therefore he uses many natural materials suspended in netting or cloth. Neto has

said that he only uses materials that can be held together naturally when assembling his sculptures. For the wood in 'anthropodino', Neto's largest sculpture, he has all the bones created and held together with joints and the soft stretchy material that covers and makes up the sculpture.

³⁰Throughout my research I have found that for Yayoi Kusama, her best work in terms of being soft sculpture and a fully immersive installation piece is her series the Driving Image Environment which includes her many phallic like stuffed furniture, macaroni covered floors and mannequins, and infinity net covered walls. As I mentioned earlier these shows were received well and the viewers found them fascinating for their motion qualities even though they were all stationary.



Fig 24

³⁰ Yayoi Kusama by Phaidon

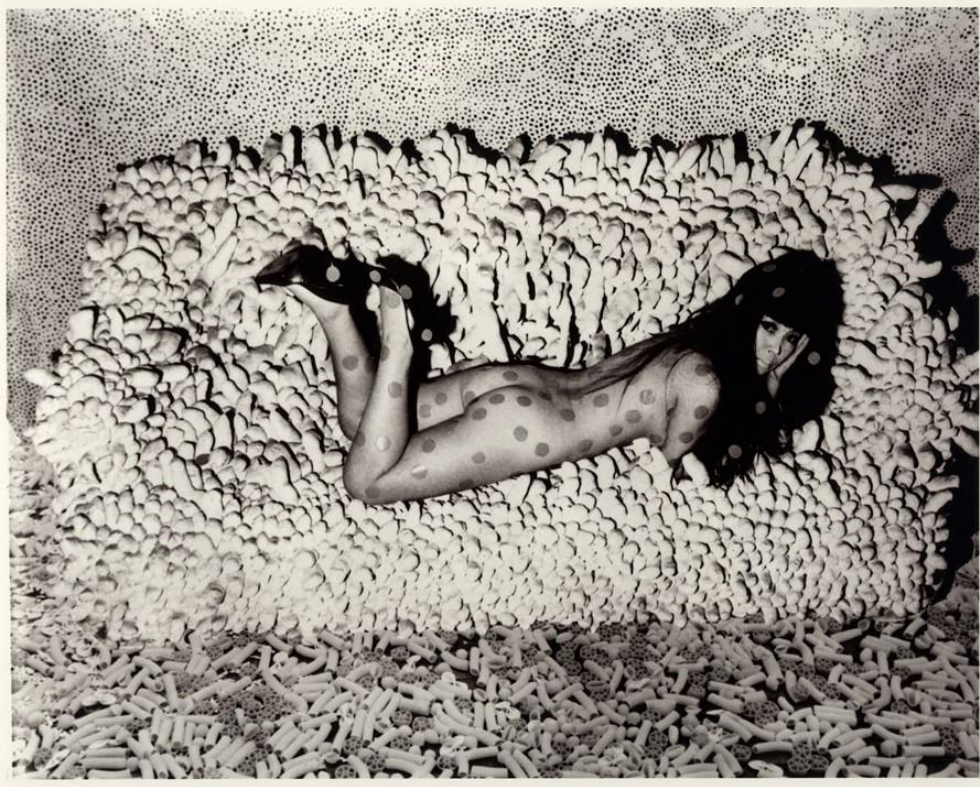


Fig 25

Critiques in the 60s found it very difficult to address the extreme sexuality and anger and fear being represented by the thoughts of stuffed accumulation sculptures. This is due to the state in which respect and equal rights for woman was still not strong in the fine art world at the time. Kusama was and still is a very strong female person with a mental illness, these things inspire most of her art. During Kusama's showings of her series driving image she would go around emotionless and very professionally to show her seriousness of how she deeply feels about the work she created. ³¹Kusama's incorporation of both fully immersive art and Soft sculpture, bring her visions of the infinite net and dots that cover the world to life so well as the 3d aspect give texture to the piece while the sprawling patterns engulf the surrounding area, closing in on the viewer, attempting to give the effect that Kusama endured as a child when she hallucinated that everything around her was covered in a patterns and eventually it engulfed her to the point where she no longer felt her body or time and space. During these

³¹ Yayoi Kusama by Phaidon
Infinity Net By yayoi Kusama Tate publishing 2011

driving image shows, Kusama would also have the Beatles music playing extremely loud in the exhibit along with a tv playing the local news. Bringing a different aspect of culture to the county the show is being exhibited.

Claes Oldenburg is a bit complicated when it comes to how he progressed his art to today. Instead of continuing his soft sculpture, he decided to go big with giant outdoor sculptures made of mostly metal. ³²Claes had great reason for his venturing away from soft indoor sculpture. He said, “I am for an art, that does something other than sit on its ass in a museum.” The unfortunate thing about soft sculpture is that it’s very hard to maintain it when it’s out at will of the elements. You can have outdoor soft sculpture shows but they will only last a small amount of time, while giant hard materials such as metals and stone can last an extremely long time outdoors. Yayoi Kusama also ventured to the large outdoor art for many of her projects, leaving the only artist Ernesto Neto still creating large scale soft sculpture to this day. But his younger age has a very strong impact on his abilities for creating his sculptures as both Kusama and Oldenburg are in their 90s now, making it much easier for them to just make designs and having other people build the actual work. A method a lot of artists do from the get-go. A questionable method but can still respected.

So, I’ll have to say Claes Oldenburg’s best immersive soft sculpture he has had is his ice bag. Oldenburg said that ‘it’s not about an ice bag at all, it’s about release and tension’.

³² <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-claes-oldenburgs-supersized-pop-sculptures-made-public-art-fun>



Fig 26 & 27

³³Oldenburg had an extreme fascination with how the simple ice bag can be manipulated so easily and can amplify other objects nearby by many different aesthetic relations. The Ice Bag is an extremely interesting large-scale installation sculpture that's is 18ft long and 11ft high. The sculpture is of a simple giant ice bag that twists and rises and expands due to the mechanics within the sculpture. Oldenburg said that the motion of the soft material resembles that of human flesh and intestines moving naturally. He had a vision for this ice bag piece to be duplicated and placed all across the country, placed in any and every type of location possible to have the ice bag interact with the weather any buildings or land around it. He said in his video 'Claes Oldenburg: Sort of a commercial for an icebag' that 'I even have a possible plan to have wheels on it so it can roam around through parks.' In this video he also showed his ice bag n different weather conditions and how the different lightings of day and night on both the hard cap piece of the ice bag and the material.

³³ <https://vimeo.com/252262676>



Fig 28 &29

This technical ability to connect mechanical engineering to a soft sculpture, to give it movement is an extremely good example how soft sculpture and immersive/ installation art is progressing quickly to something artists of the past could have never imagined.

Conclusion

In conclusion to the points, artists, and their works I have brought up in this thesis, I believe I show clearly how soft sculpture and immersive/ installation art stemmed from thousands of years of Artistic evolution. They are extremely new forms of art that have not been fully explored yet. As for the possibilities you can achieve through these mediums, they're endless. Through the short thesis I have written I have shown that each artist achieved extremely different effects from each other in terms of their completed works when it comes to their takes on both soft sculpture and immersive/ installation art. I believe that soft sculpture and immersive art will become more and more prominent as the years go by as more artists are discovering new fantastical ways to evolve art from simple white cube expectations to complete new worlds full of unexplainable things at first viewing.

Both soft sculpture and immersive/ installation art have very different qualities that make them very broad and strong areas of fine art. They give the artist an ability to expand as far as they can with any piece, in the current day, as I feel a lot of art before soft sculpture and immersive art was far too 2 dimensional and broken down into strict sections of how art should be, I am extremely glad that artists have moved on from these definitions of art and are no longer afraid to have to meet requirements for how they should make and display and make the art. Beautiful and surreal sculptures and immersive spaces that could've only been ever been imagined in the minds and dreams of people are slowly becoming more and more prominent in the fine art world which is so encouraging, as it brings so much more life and new ways of thinking to our dark world.

From writing this thesis I have proven the fact that soft sculpture and immersive art were majoring jumping off points into new forms of art the world couldn't have seen and experienced before. As I mentioned, about Ernesto Neto, he has brought an entirely new

aspect to the art of soft sculpture and immersive art by creating pieces that need to be smelt, touched, and even worn by audience members for them to fully experience the piece. This is a million miles away from going to a white cube gallery, which usually has sectioned off areas around and Infront of art pieces so that you can only experience the view of the piece. As a younger artist than Kusama and Oldenburg, Neto is a pioneer in the soft sculpture, immersive and installation art world who's soft yet extremely detailed and cared about pieces continue to grow and become more complex as the years go on. Neto's attitude towards art is something very admirable as he doesn't care about the status of his participants in his shows, he simple needs them to learn about the human condition and how he can effect more humans in the future through his artworks.

I have shown in this thesis how important viewer interaction is when it comes to soft sculpture and immersive art. Yayoi Kusama's pieces 'accumulations, wouldn't have been received as well at all if they hadn't been fully experienced by the viewer through interactions with the physical sculptures. Ernesto Neto especially, His works are almost fully circulated around viewer interaction because as he said the participants activate the artwork. Claes Oldenburg's soft sculpture and installations pieces are a lot less heavy on participation of the viewers. He takes more of a classical approach in which he wants to the viewers to experience the pieces through sight and sound alone. Some of Oldenburg's pieces can move on their own so human interaction isn't needed to complete the piece. Oldenburg's pieces stand strong on their own, activating and performing the art themselves.

This thesis shows that the evolution of fine art and what it can be, is very quickly changing through the discoveries of new kinds of art and evolutions of the art we already have. The realms of soft sculpture and immersive/ installation art have only just begun to be fully explored and I for one can't wait to see what the future holds for these mediums and the worldwide idea of hoe fine art can and will change.

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