

## Protest Art

**Protest art** or **activist art** refers to the signs, banners, and any other form of creative expression used by activists to convey a particular cause or message. It is a visual action taken by social activists to make a point clear. Protest art is also used to with the intention to promote counter-thinking about the fabric of society itself. Often, such art is used as part of demonstrations or acts of civil disobedience. Some key icons in protest art have been the dove, the peace symbol, and taunting messages.

Protest art relies on people's understanding of the symbols used in the art. Without understanding, the piece is useless.

While some protest art is associated with trained and professional artists, an extensive knowledge in art is not required to take part in protest art. The most important part of protest art is element of social activism. Therefore, protest art requires, most importantly, a cause or an issue. Protest art can take on the form of a simple sign displaying a social message of displeasure or a large banner expressing discontent with something in particular or in general.

Often, protest artists bypass the art-world institutions and commercial gallery system in an attempt to reach a wider audience through means that are most accessible to them. Instead of creating social activist art and displaying them only in art galleries where access is restricted to the "economically privileged," protest artists are trying to ensure their message reaches the largest number of people. Furthermore, protest art is not limited to one region or country but is rather a social activism method that is used around the world. For example, artists in South Africa during the 1990s created art using a range of media that explored memories of an integrated community that was once the heart of Cape Town.

There are many politically charged pieces of fine art—such as Picasso's *Guernica*, some of Norman Carlberg's Vietnam war-era work, or Susan Crile's images of torture at Abu Ghraib—which could perhaps be termed "protest art," except that they lack the easy portability and disposability often associated with protest art.

*Retrieved from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

