

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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## Kitsch

(\_estetikk) Fra tysk: “skrap”, “juks”. Ordet “Kitsch” oppstod i München i Tyskland ca. år 1860 (Moles 1972 s. 7).

Kitsch er det middelmådige, konvensjonelle, bekvemme, romantiserende, klisjé-pregete, banale (Moles 1972). Det er kunst som (av kunsteliten) blir stemplet som dårlig, vulgær, verdiløs, særlig fordi den er uoriginal og etterligner store kunstverk. Slik kunst er dekorativ og patetisk, f.eks. fordi idealer fra en gammel tid henger igjen i en ny tid etter at de har blitt stive og forslitte. Ludwig Giesz’ bok *Kitschens fenomenologi* (1971) definerer kitsch som kunstnerisk søppel som skaper stemninger. Kitsch dreier seg om “det rene, uskyldige, naive og ureflekterte” (Gelfert 2010 s. 22).

“The word *Kitsch* is German in origin and had previously been translated into French as *art de pacotille* (junk art) or *art tape-à-l’oeil* (garish art), but the original term has now become firmly established in all European languages. Used as an adjective, *kitsch* or *kitschy* (dis)qualifies cultural products intended for the masses and appreciated by them. As a noun the term designates a category of taste, certainly linked to an aesthetics, but even more so to an ethics [...] it is both an art of happiness and an expression of bad taste. [...] As a kind of debased popularization, it offers a decadent model that is all the more alluring for being so easily accessible. This is, at least, what its detractors say.” (Denys Riout i [http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s2\\_10097.pdf](http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s2_10097.pdf); lesedato 30.08.16)

Kitsch framstår som handelsvare mer enn kunst, en kvasi-kunst som sikter etter en vulgær masse-smak (Gelfert 2000 s. 7). Kitsch mangler originalitet (Gelfert 2000 s. 13). Det er overflatisk kunst, men mangelen på dybde gjelder ikke det temaet som behandles i verket, men måten det behandles kunstnerisk på. Det kitschige har falsk, simulert dybde (Gelfert 2000 s. 7). “Krevende” kunst har fjernet seg stadig mer fra det folkelige og beveget seg inn i elitismen, med slike kunstneres forakt for det populære og lett forståelige. Likevel gjør ikke popularitet nødvendigvis et verk til kitsch. Shakespeare traff folkets smak i sin samtid uten at hans dramaer på noen måte er overflatiske (Gelfert 2000 s. 8).

Det har blitt oppfattet som respektløs vulgarisering og som diletantiske krysninger av stiler (Lüdeke 2011 s. 340). I kitsch er det dessuten ofte et misforhold mellom

materialet og det som framstilles, f.eks. en Venus fra Milo lagd av sjokolade (Gelfert 2000 s. 8), men materialet er ikke avgjørende, for en engel av ekte marmor på en gravstein kan oppfattes som (religiøs) kitsch.

Kitsch svulmer ofte av følelser og har redundans, dvs. overtydelighet (Gelfert 2010 s. 167). Dybden i kitsch-verket er mer en påstand verket (eller dets forfatter) kommer med enn en realitet (Gelfert 2010 s. 167). Kitsch strever mot høyder som den ikke når (Gelfert 2000 s. 11). Derfor er ikke den amerikanske kunstneren Jeff Koons' demonstrativt vulgære kunstverk kitsch, fordi hans kunst ikke gir seg ut for å være dyp og ekte. Det finnes dessuten mange grensetilfeller av kitsch. Den tyske professoren Hans-Dieter Gelfert hevder at de britiske preraphaelittene skapte verk som er en blanding (symbiose) av kunst og kitsch (Gelfert 2000 s. 20).

Kitsch er negasjon av det autentiske og et slags avfallsprodukt av kunsten, og inngår som en bestanddel av det borgerlige overflodssamfunnet (Moles 1972 s. 7 og 106). Den amerikanske kunstkritikeren Clement Greenberg har beskrevet fenomenet slik: "Kitsch, using for raw material the debased and academicized simulacra of genuine culture, welcomes and cultivates this insensibility. It is the source of its profits. Kitsch is mechanical and operates by formulas. Kitsch is vicarious experience and faked sensations. Kitsch changes according to style, but remains always the same. Kitsch is the epitome of all that is spurious in the life of our times. Kitsch pretends to demand nothing of its customers except their money – not even their time." (Greenberg sitert fra Beaty 2007 s. 75)

Kitsch framstår både som noe vakkert og noe varig – noe som aldri trenger å forandre seg, som hviler i seg selv på en harmonisk måte, og som ikke skaper tvil (Wolfram Pfreunds Schuh i <https://kulturkritik.net/begriffe/index.php?lex=kitsch>; lesedato 22.03.18). Kitsch "bedrar oss til å tro på oppløsning av spenninger og besverger affirmativt gyldigheten av en verdensorden som det er umulig å tvile på" (Gelfert 2010 s. 166). Den spiller dessuten i langt høyere grad enn kunst på følelsenes klaviatur (Gelfert 2000 s. 68). Sentimentalisering og inderliggjøring er typisk (Gelfert 2000 s. 77 og 85). Den kritiske distansen forsvinner. Den typiske kitsch-elsker "nyter tårenes rensende bad" (Gelfert 2000 s. 37).

"Et gjennomgående kjennetegn ved kitsch er dens avvisning av alt komplisert til fordel for det enkle. Av dette kan vi skjønne at kitschkonsumenten søker avlastning fra det kompliserte i den moderne hverdag [...] Blant de typiske kjennetegnene ved kitsch er at den forenkler virkeligheten, harmoniserer og forskjønner" (Gelfert 2000 s. 72 og 76). Barnlig uskyld er en av kitschens "sentralverdier" ("ein Zentralwert des Kitsches") (Gelfert 2000 s. 68). Kitschens mål er paradiset på jord (Gelfert 2000 s. 68).

Ifølge Hans-Dieter Gelfert finnes kitsch ofte i en sfære der det etiske blandes med det estetiske, altså når noe etisk viktig blir estetisert (2000 s. 12). Gelfert mener denne sfæren omfatter f.eks. barnedåp, bryllup, jubileer og begravelser. Det samme

gjelder for salgsboder for minnesmerker, plaketter og lignende, altså med objekter som skal gjenopplive følelsen av verdighet, beundring og stolthet. Folkelig kunst, f.eks. rosemalte ølkrus, har i stor grad blitt til kitsch, fordi noe slippes ut på markedet som mangler sin opprinnelige autentisitet, der høykultur har sunket ned til å bli trivialkultur (Gelfert 2000 s. 15).

“Hvis det er riktig at kitsch består i et misforhold mellom estetisk-formale og etisk-substansielle intensjoner, kan vi forvente oss to grunnformer. Hvis den formale intensjonen sikter høyere enn det den innholdsmessig kan oppfylle, har vi å gjøre med formkitsch. Er derimot kravet til det innholdsmessige høyere enn det formen kan romme, får vi stoffkitsch. Formkitsch blir ofte oppfattet som svulstig.” (Gelfert 2000 s. 16). Det svulstige uttrykker et ønske om anerkjennelse og beundring, og det vil framstå som en autoritet, “enten det dreier seg om svulstig språk, svulstig musikk eller svulstige ideer” (Gelfert 2000 s. 22).

Kitsch kjennetegnes ikke av manglende kunstneriske evner hos den som har lagd verket. Hulemalerier fra steinalderen eller barnetegninger kan ikke kalles kitsch, men snarere motsatt: kitsch viser oss det altfor perfekte, altfor kunstlete, og det som etterligner annen kunst (Gelfert 2000 s. 13).

“Den fullkomne kunstner er som en vektløfter, som klarer å løfte en stor vekt over hodet uten skjelving og vakling. Trivialkunstneren klarer et tilsvarende løft med en liten vekt, mens den ufullkomne kunstner klarer skjelvende og vaklende å løfte det han har valgt seg ut. Kitschforfatteren derimot, tar tak i skumgummivekten og får seg selv og sine lesere til å tro at han faktisk løfter en tung vekt.” (Gelfert 2000 s. 15-16).

“Kunst renser psyken; kitschen fyller den [dvs. psyken] helt med surrogater, slik den wilhelminske borger stappet sin bolig full av plysj og velstandssymboler.” (Gelfert 2000 s. 91-92)

“Det kitsch-begjærlige menneske søker etter tilfredsstillende av to motsatte behov. Han lengter på den ene siden tilbake til en idealisert barndom, da livet var enkelt og overskuelig, slik at man kan føle seg ivaretatt og trygg. På den andre siden lengter han også etter trygghet i en mektig helhet, enten det er i naturen, folket, nasjonen, religionen eller en verdensanskuelse i form av en ideologi. I det første tilfellet vender psyken seg bakover, i det andre tilfellet projiserer den ønskeforestillinger og selvopphøysesfantasier på en autoritet.” (Gelfert 2010 s. 164) Det er altså to muligheter: regresjon og projeksjon, og begge ligger på en vertikal akse. Regresjon søker nedover, projeksjon oppover (Gelfert 2010 s. 165). Naziregimets framstillinger av blod-og-jord-idyller er et eksempel på regresjonskitsch, mens nazistenes monumentalbygg og iscenesatte “lyskatedraler” er projeksjonskitsch (Gelfert 2010 s. 174). At noe blir smått og søtt er typisk for regresjonskitsch (Gelfert 2010 s. 171).

Fascismen har blitt oppfattet som en estetisk utopi, som brukte “kitschorgier” for å imponere befolkningen (Gelfert 2000 s. 83). Både Hitler og Mussolini hadde prøvd seg som kunstnere, men mislykkes, og deres kunst har blitt karakterisert som kitsch. Også kommunistene gjorde intens bruk av kitsch, og det er mulig at alle utopier forvandler seg til kitsch når de tilskrives absolutt gyldighet (Gelfert 2000 s. 83).

Gelfert mener at minnesmerker og patriotiske malerier ofte er kitsch, enten disse er preget “den nasjonale overlegenhetens dominanslyst eller underkastelseslysten hos undersåten overfor herskeren” (2000 s. 23). Regresjon og projeksjon er de to psykiske mekanismene som ligger til grunn for alle kitschopplevelser, og begge fjerner autentisitet (Gelfert 2000 s. 66).

Usikkerhet og angst unngås gjennom projiseringer på arketypisk sikre instanser, på stabilitet, lov og rett (Gelfert 2000 s. 77). Familiens mor symboliserer trygg tilflukt, familiefaren framstår som beskytter, den elskede blir til føyelig kone og den edle villmann idealiseres. Alle disse blir forbilder i idealisert skikkelse.

Den tyske maleren Karl Hofer ga kitsch rollen å tilfredsstillende “på en kompromissløs, ukomplisert og meningsfull måte massens dype og rene følelse for det edle og vakre” (sitert fra Gelfert 2000 s. 84).

Nærmest fenomenet kitsch “kommer man ved å legge sammen effektene av smakløshet, banalitet og juggel. Kitsch forekommer i alle kunstformer, i dagliglivet, i religionen og i politikken. [...] De mest frodige banaliteter finner forfatteren [av boka *Kitsch-Lexicon fra A til Z*, Gert Richter] under sine mange kirkegårdsvandringar. Med skrekkblandet fryd finner filosofidoktoren utallige eksempler på “tåre-marmor”-kitsch. For eksempel den lille marmorpiken som bøyer seg og kysser bildet av sin henfarne pappa, som for sin del stirrer ustoppelig heroisk ut i evigheten. Eller monumentet over den triste kvinnen som brer over sitt døende tuberkuløse barn. [...] Det finnes kitsch i musikken, i postkortenes verden, i malerkunsten, i all verdens nipsfigurer og ikke minst i operaen.” (Alf G. Andersen i *Aftenposten* 26. mars 1986 s. 23)

“[T]he Germans give the wonderful name of *Kitsch*: popular, commercial art and literature with their chromeotypes, magazine covers, illustrations, ads, slick and pulp fiction, comics, Tin Pan Alley music, tap dancing, Hollywood movies, etc., etc. [...] To fill the demand of the new market, a new commodity was devised: ersatz culture, kitsch, destined for those who, insensible to the values of genuine culture, are hungry nevertheless for the diversion that only culture of some sort can provide. [...] The precondition for kitsch, a condition without which kitsch would be impossible, is the availability close at hand of a fully matured cultural tradition, whose discoveries, acquisitions, and perfected self-consciousness kitsch can take advantage of for its own ends. It borrows from it devices, tricks, stratagems, rules of thumb, themes, converts them into a system, and discards the rest. It draws its

life blood, so to speak, from this reservoir of accumulated experience.” (Clement Greenberg i <http://goodgravydesign.net/images/School%20Docs/illus/Greenberg.pdf>; lesedato 12.03.14)

“ “If works of art were judged democratically – that is, according to how many people like them – kitsch would easily defeat all its competitors,” observed Thomas Kulka. Yet, despite its status as a source of pleasure for a mass audience, kitsch is typically considered a negative product and used as a pejorative statement. It is seen as a type of creation that reaffirms rather than challenges the collective norm, a source of sheer entertainment in opposition to the elevated perception generated by high art. Though its etymology is ambiguous, scholars generally agree that the word “kitsch” entered the German language in the mid-nineteenth century. Often synonymous with “trash” as a descriptive term, kitsch may derive from the German word *kitschen*, meaning [...] to collect rubbish from the street [...]. The German verb *verkitschen* (to make cheap), is another likely source. Similarly, the Oxford English Dictionary defines kitsch in the verb form as “to render worthless,” classifying kitsch objects as “characterized by worthless pretentiousness.” Other potential sources also include a mispronunciation of the English word *sketch*, an inversion of the French word *chic*, or a derivation of the Russian *keetcheetsya* (to be haughty and puffed up). Whatever its linguistic origin, “kitsch” first gained common usage in the jargon of Munich art dealers to designate “cheap artistic stuff” in the 1860s and 70s. By the first decades of the twentieth century, the term had caught on internationally. Kitsch gained theoretical momentum in the early to mid-twentieth century, when utilized to describe both objects and a way of life brought on by the urbanization and mass-production of the industrial revolution. Thus, kitsch possessed aesthetic as well as political implications, informing debates about mass culture and the growing commercialization of society.” (Whitney Rugg i <http://humstatic.uchicago.edu/faculty/wjtm/glossary2004/kitsch.htm>; lesedato 03.10.16)

I artikkelen “Avant-garde and Kitsch” (1939) skrev Greenberg: “[W]hen enough time has elapsed the new is looted for new “twists,” which are then watered down and served up as kitsch.” (siteret fra [http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s2\\_10097.pdf](http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s2_10097.pdf); lesedato 30.08.16)

Kitsch har blitt kalt “false aesthetic consciousness [...] the kitsch aesthetic is imbued with the power to lie without necessarily offending its audience. [...] Kitsch, aside from its generic definition as ‘art which is simply in bad taste’, is a concept which “clearly centres around such questions as imitation, forgery, counterfeit, and what we may call the aesthetics of deception or selfdeception” (Calinescu 229).” (Christine Evans i <http://cinophile.ca/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/evans-serialkillers.pdf>; lesedato 28.08.19)

Det er ifølge Hans-Dieter Gelfert en absolutt motsetning mellom kitsch og respektløs latter, for slik latter setter spørsmålsteget ved alle de verdiene som

kitschen representerer (2000 s. 126). Det er også en motsetning mellom respektløs underholdning og kitsch, fordi kitschen peker mot høye verdier (Gelfert 2000 s. 129). Underholdnings- og trivillitteratur fremmer nytelse uten anstrengelse, mens kitsch sikter mot det dypt alvorlige og inderlige (Gelfert 2000 s. 131).

Den tyske filosofen Theodor W. Adornos påstand om at “all that is or was art, can become kitsch”, “brings to mind the dialectics of art and kitsch [...] Kitsch is one of the most basic cultural categories used frequently by the consumer society [...]”. It is probably so because kitsch contains a direct, concrete and irresistible temptation of an instant infantile-narcissistic satisfaction; satisfaction that is maintained within the cult of beauty and in a sentimental-romantic mood which facilitates the acquisition of cultural products. Today, in the post-modernity era which negates the traditional understanding of kitsch as a phenomenon that stirs negative aesthetical associations, kitsch has become a primary category of culture and practically none of the disciplines in the world (politics, religion, medicine, science, sports, fashion, intimate relations, etc.) is impervious to its influence. Literature is no exception here. The expert on kitsch, Jean Baudrillard, defines it as a certain general cultural category which is difficult to define but should definitely not be mistaken with concrete real objects. He claims it is rather a pseudoobject, simulacrum, copy, imitation, stereotype, shortage of real significance and excess of signs, allegorical references, conflicting connotations which contrast the aesthetics of beauty and originality with their own aesthetics of simulation. This is, on the other hand, strictly connected with the social function ascribed to kitsch, which consists in expressing social aspirations, class expectations, the magical sense of belonging to culture, and knowing the forms, customs and symbols of higher classes.” (Agnieszka Matusiak i <http://www.staff.amu.edu.pl/~comparis/attachments/article/225/11.Agnieszka%20Matusiak.pdf>; lesedato 03.05.13).

Alt søtlig og idealisert “vekker kitschige begjær” (Gelfert 2000 s. 21). Hagedverger, altså små dvergefigurer plassert i en hage, er et erkeeksempel på kitsch, og også et eksempel på nips. De er små og “søte”, og appellerer til vår egen følelse av overlegenhet, til morsinstinktet hos kvinner og til beskytterinstinktet hos menn, og hos barn gir en hage-dverg den behagelige følelsen av at det finnes en enda mer hjelpeløs skapning (Gelfert 2000 s. 31).

Hans-Dieter Gelfert kaller den bayerske kongen Ludvig 2.s slott Neuschwanstein for kitsch (2000 s. 55). Dette slottet ble bygd på 1800-tallet og imiterer et middelalderslott. Det er en stor turistmagnet.

De tyske Heimat-filmene, som har handling fra en idyllisk landsbygd og der folkedrakter (og ellers rustikke klær) ofte brukes, og som i 1950-årenes Tyskland fungerte som et slags legemiddel etter krigens traumer, har blitt stemplet som kitsch (Gelfert 2000 s. 94).

Den sosialistiske realismen har blitt kalt “proletarisk kitsch” (Michael M. Czernich i Brackert og Lämmert 1976 s. 91).

Monumentalskulpturene av tyskerne Arno Breker og Josef Thorak, og verk av arkitekten Albert Speer, alle aktive under og verdsatt av naziregimet, har blitt kalt kitsch. Speer ville bygge om Berlin for Hitlers tredje rike. Det samme gjelder lysprosjeksjonene under partidagene i Nürnberg, og omfatter periodens begeistring for poeten Hölderlins sublime dikt og komponisten Wagner (Gelfert 2000 s. 96).

“Examples of kitsch may be particular to a time and place or they may be universally applicable: Norman Rockwell’s *Saturday Evening Post* magazine covers epitomize American World War II-era kitsch, whereas global kitsch resides in souvenir replicas of famous tourist landmarks the world over. Works of art that predate the introduction of the word into the vernacular are now deemed kitsch retrospectively: Pre-Raphaelite paintings and some Wagner compositions have been aligned with the theatrical emotionalism and affectation of kitsch. Indisputable examples of high art can be transformed into kitsch, prompting Matei Calinescu’s directive that, “determin[ing] whether an object is kitsch always involves considerations of purpose and context.” Thus, Gustave Caillebotte’s *Paris Street: A Rainy Day* is not kitsch, but umbrellas sold at the Art Institute of Chicago decorated with the painting’s reproduction are definitive kitsch, as would be “a real Rembrandt hung in a millionaire’s home elevator,” according to Calinescu. [...] highly charged imagery, language, or music that triggers an automatic, and therefore unreflective, emotional reaction. Pictures of couples silhouetted against sunsets or songs with lavish, repeated crescendos elicit a conditioned response from a broad audience. Milan Kundera calls this key quality of kitsch the “second tear”: “Kitsch causes two tears to flow in quick succession. The first tear says: How nice to see the children running in the grass! The second tear says: How nice to be moved, together with all mankind, by children running in the grass! It is the second tear which makes kitsch kitsch.” The appeal of kitsch resides in its formula, its familiarity, and its validation of shared sensibilities. The self-congratulatory spirit of kitsch can also be seen as a deception.” (Whitney Rugg i <http://humstatic.uchicago.edu/faculty/wjtm/glossary2004/kitsch.htm>; lesedato 03.10.16)

“Kitsch holds up a “highly considerate mirror,” according to Hermann Broch, that allows contemporary man to “recognize himself in the counterfeit image it throws back at him and to confess his own lies (with a delight which is to a certain extent sincere).” By providing comfort, kitsch performs a denial. It glosses over harsh truths and anesthetizes genuine pain. As Harold Rosenberg perceived: “There is no counterconcept to kitsch. Its antagonist is not an idea but reality.” [...] If kitsch rivals reality while simultaneously imitating its effects, then the truth of kitsch exists in its realized fabrication. Gillo Dorfles disparaged kitsch for its falsified nature: “if we have to recognize the mass-production of industrial objects originally intended for such treatment as perfectly authentic, we must regard all reproductions of unique works which were conceived as unrepeatable as the equivalent of real

forgeries.” Whether copying a pre-existing work of art or assembling a pretense of reality, the straightforwardness of kitsch belies its inherent contradiction as a “real forgery.” [...] Kitsch does not analyze culture but repackages and stylizes it. Kitsch reinforces established conventions, appealing to mass tastes and gratifying communal experiences.” (Whitney Rugg i <http://humstatic.uchicago.edu/faculty/wjtm/glossary2004/kitsch.htm>; lesedato 03.10.16)

“It is worth remembering that kitsch is not the invention of our times as claims Hermann Broch. A bit of kitsch has always existed in each type of art waiting for the proper circumstances to be brought to light with premeditation. “Kitsch could not appear or be maintained – writes Broch – if the person who likes kitsch did not exist and as a consumer of art was not willing to buy it [...] art in its broadest sense is always a reflection of the particular person and if kitsch is a lie [...], then this accusation is directed at the person who needs such a lying and beautifying mirror in order to find themselves in it and with ingenious pleasure admit to their own lies”. An even more radical opinion is presented by Abraham Moles who claims that kitsch is within each of us; it is as stable a feature of our nature as sin.” (Agnieszka Matusiak i <http://www.staff.amu.edu.pl/~comparis/attachments/article/225/11.Agnieszka%20Matusiak.pdf>; lesedato 03.05.13).

“[K]itsch helps with its own mechanisms of infantilisation, stereotypisation, formalization, recurrence, superficiality. Kitsch awards inauthentic values with authenticity and reality [i sosialrealistisk kunst og litteratur]. It was in reference to this way of understanding kitsch that Clement Greenberg in 1939 in a well-publicized essay *Avant-garde and Kitsch* claimed: “If kitsch constitutes the official tendency in the art of Germany, Italy and Russia, then it is not due to the fact that the authorities of those countries are townsmen but because kitsch represents mass culture in these countries [...]. Kitsch is a cheap instrument of seducing the masses. [...] Kitsch keeps the dictator in close contact with the ‘spirit of the nation’ ” ” (Agnieszka Matusiak i <http://www.staff.amu.edu.pl/~comparis/attachments/article/225/11.Agnieszka%20Matusiak.pdf>; lesedato 03.05.13).

“In his last article on the Soviet cinema in the *Partisan Review*, Dwight Macdonald points out that kitsch has in the last ten years become the dominant culture in Soviet Russia. For this he blames the political regime – not only for the fact that kitsch is the official culture, but also that it is actually the dominant, most popular culture, and he quotes the following from Kurt London’s *The Seven Soviet Arts*: “... the attitude of the masses both to the old and new art styles probably remains essentially dependent on the nature of the education afforded them by their respective states.” Macdonald goes on to say: “Why after all should ignorant peasants prefer Repin (a leading exponent of Russian academic kitsch in painting) to Picasso, whose abstract technique is at least as relevant to their own primitive folk art as is the former’s realistic style? No, if the masses crowd into the Tretyakov (Moscow’s museum of contemporary Russian art: kitsch), it is largely because they have been conditioned to shun



‘formalism’ and to admire ‘socialist realism.’ ” In the first place it is not a question of a choice between merely the old and merely the new, as London seems to think – but of a choice between the bad, up-to-date old and the genuinely new. The alternative to Picasso is not Michelangelo, but kitsch. In the second place, neither in backward Russia nor in the advanced West do the masses prefer kitsch simply because their governments condition them toward it. Where state educational systems take the trouble to mention art, we are told to respect the old masters, not kitsch; and yet we go and hang Maxfield Parrish or his equivalent on our walls, instead of Rembrandt and Michelangelo. Moreover, as Macdonald himself points out, around 1925 when the Soviet regime was encouraging avant-garde cinema, the Russian masses continued to prefer Hollywood movies.” (Clement Greenberg i <http://goodgravydesign.net/images/School%20Docs/illus/Greenberg.pdf>; lesedato 12.03.14)

“Hermann Broch, one of the first critics to write seriously about *Kitsch*, sees it as a form of “radical evil” that destroys value systems, since its essence “is the confusion of the ethical category with the aesthetic category” (“Evil in the Value-System,” 33). In search of the pleasing effect, one that offers the most inexpensive seduction, kitsch art does not aim to be the product of good work but merely to be an attractive end product. This perverse method means that *Kitsch* uses tried and tested techniques and that it turns its back on creation in order to achieve a risk-free success in its effort to seduce. As Albert Kohn explains in an introductory note to his French translation of Broch’s 1955 book *Dichtung und Erkennen*: “The German word *Kitsch* has no equivalent in French. It refers to all genres of objects in bad taste, of artistically pretentious junk, popularizing commonplace forms through their mass-production, but it also applies to literary, artistic or musical works which aim for easy effects (such as melodrama) and pomposity, and cultivate sentimentality or mindless conformity.” (Denys Riout i [http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s2\\_10097.pdf](http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s2_10097.pdf); lesedato 30.08.16)

“Nevertheless, at a time when pop art was blurring the ordering of established values in the avant-garde world, a new form appeared that staked a claim to *Kitsch*, and this was “camp.” This American term is used to describe “something so outrageous or in such bad taste as to be considered amusing” (*Webster’s New Ideal Dictionary*, 2nd ed., 1989). Since then, artists in Europe as well as in the United States have been exploiting both the first level – their works are crude, and the second level – they are doing this deliberately, joyously combining what is pleasing to the eye and what is revolting (for example, Jeff Koons). We can no longer tell with such works whether *Kitsch* is simply amusing – there is a kitsch-man perhaps ready to be awakened in every lover of art – or whether it is both funny and critically insightful.” (Denys Riout i [http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s2\\_10097.pdf](http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s2_10097.pdf); lesedato 01.09.16)

“The Kitsch Movement began 15 years ago when Odd Nerdrum declared himself a Kitsch Painter. This occurred at the opening of the large 1998 retrospective exhibit

of his paintings at the Astrup Fearnley Museum in Oslo. It was at this point that Nerdrum admitted that those who had been calling his paintings kitsch were correct in doing so, and he apologized for masquerading as an artist. Nerdrum had not been the only painter to be branded with the kitsch label, [...] but he was the first one to accept the moniker and wear it with pride. [...] Kitsch painters embrace it as a positive term: not in opposition to art, but as its own independent superstructure. Thus, Kitsch painters assert that Kitsch is not an art movement, but a philosophical movement: a superstructure of values and philosophy which are separate from art. Nerdrum claims that, “Kitsch signified the antithesis of modern art. Kitsch became the unified concept for all that wasn’t intellectual or new, for all that was conceived as brown, old-fashioned, sentimental, melodramatic and pathetic.” He quoted the philosopher Hermann Broch (1886-1951), a leading proponent of Modernism in his time, who had some things to say about it like, “Kitsch is the Anti-Christ, stagnation and death”.” ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brandon-kralik/the-dawn-of-the-kitsch-mo\\_b\\_4013483.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brandon-kralik/the-dawn-of-the-kitsch-mo_b_4013483.html); lesedato 11.08.16) En bok om emnet er Odd Nerdrums *Kitsch: Mer enn kunst* (2009).

“There is something over the top about those works. They tug too insistently at the heart-strings, as though not really convinced that they contain as much in the way of sentiment as you are supposed to think they do. There is kitsch in literature too. Those ghastly scenes in Dickens, where the little victim dies, blessing from his innocent heart the grieving bystanders; those greeting-card lyrics by Patience Strong, dedicated to ‘dear old dad’ or ‘the new arrival’; those would-be profundities from Maya Angelou – all such things seem to be infected with the same disease. You can’t take them seriously, even though seriously is the only way they can be taken if they are taken at all. Oscar Wilde famously said that you need a heart of stone not to laugh at the death of Little Nell (in Dickens’s *Old Curiosity Shop*). He meant that Dickens’s unscrupulous stirring up of sentiment conceals a total lack of it. Dickens is in fact writing about nothing, and has used all the clichés of compassion in order to disguise the fact that he is more interested in his own compassion than in the poor little excuse for it. If he felt what he claims to feel he would find it *hard* to write; the words would come from him tarnished with the pain that prompted them [...] The ‘yuk’ feeling [dvs. en kvalmende følelse] is there on the canvas, on the screen, in the notes, in the words. Whether it is a garden gnome, the sound of Bing Crosby launching into ‘White Christmas’, the blinking innocent eyes of Bambi or the words of Patience Strong, the kitsch phenomenon is there as strong and recognisable as your mother’s face. You seldom if ever have the *question*, whether this is kitsch or not. If you think it might be, then it is. [...] kitsch is a *modern* phenomenon. No art, music or literature before the end of the 18th century seems to display it. Those medieval frescoes of sinners being forked into hell or wafted to heaven are primitive, even absurd. But somehow the feeling is real, however crudely presented. 18th century opera is packed with emotion, but contains not a trace of kitsch. Only with the ‘thees’ and ‘thous’ of Victorian poetry does the disease begin to grow in our poetic tradition.” (Roger Scruton i <http://>

[www.forbes.com/sites/rogerscruton/2014/02/21/a-fine-line-between-art-and-kitsch/#477f600c3679](http://www.forbes.com/sites/rogerscruton/2014/02/21/a-fine-line-between-art-and-kitsch/#477f600c3679); lesedato 19.09.16)

Idéhistorikeren Trond Berg Eriksen skrev i boka *Nietzsche og det moderne* (1989) at den tyske filosofen Friedrich Nietzsches “profetiske” bok *Slik talte Zarathustra* (1883-85) er kitsch. Berg Eriksen hevdet at boka bare har en imitert dybde, ikke sann eksistensiell eller filosofisk dybde, og at den legger opp til reservasjonsløs hengivelse fra leseren. Idéhistorikeren hevdet at Nietzsches bok på denne måten ligner Knut Hamsuns roman *Markens Grøde* (1917) og sveitseren Herman Hesses roman *Siddharta* (1922), som også er kitsch. De tre bøkene har ikke ekte dybde, og forfatterne legger opp til å bli lett forstått og “dyrket” av publikum.

Den amerikanske forfatteren Francis Scott Fitzgerald “took the shallowness of the rich for granted – he thought it was part of their glamour. And, for all his fascinated attention to wealth, he knew what to make of such kitsch repositories as Gatsby’s mansion, with its Marie Antoinette music rooms, its Restoration salons, and the solid-gold toilet set on Gatsby’s dresser” i romanen *The Great Gatsby* (1925) (David Denby i <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2003/04/21/the-cost-of-desire>; lesedato 23.11.20).

Holocaust-tematikk popularisert og rettet til et massemarked har blitt kalt “Holokitsch” (ordet skal stamme fra Art Spiegelman; Joch, Mix m.fl. 2009 s. 314).

“The historian Tony Judt once recalled that during a visit to Berlin’s Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, he saw “bored schoolchildren on an obligatory outing [playing] hide-and-seek among the stones.” He argued, “When we ransack the past for political profit – selecting the bits that can serve our purposes and recruiting history to teach opportunistic moral lessons – we get bad morality and bad history.” To which one should add: We also get kitsch. Even when done well, commemoration almost always skates precariously close to kitsch. One might wish that the Holocaust were an exception in this regard, and that it will always, in Leon Wieseltier’s phrase, “press upon the souls of all who learn of it.” But it is not, much as we might wish otherwise.” (David Rieff i <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/04/14/the-united-states-museum-of-holocaust-kitsch/>; lesedato 22.09.16) Noen romaner om Holocaust har også blitt stemplet som kitsch. “Det man imidlertid enkelt får tak, i er *Urmakeren i Auschwitz*, utgitt tidligere i år, en roman som kan nevnes sammen med titler som *Gutten i den stripete pysjamasen*, *Saras nøkkel*, *Boktyven*, *Høyt-leseren*. Kort sagt, holocaustkitsch. Holocaust-kitschen tilbyr forsonende fortellinger, og sjalter ut alt som ikke passer inn i et skjema der godt og ondt, passende og upassende, menneskelig og umenneskelig er plassert i tydelige ruter uten berøringspunkter til hverandre.” (Olaf Haagensen i *Morgenbladet* 8.–14. april 2016 s. 50)

“Filmmaking, as a collaborative medium, is almost by necessity a conflicted art form divided between opposing ambitions for positive reviews and revenues, the

critical and the commercial. Producers and studio executives do not normally share the same long-term goals of writers and directors, and because film is an industry, short-term financial arguments typically win out. Privileging economic over artistic concerns tends to result in what Walter Benjamin calls the natural result of overproduction and what many consider to be art's antithesis: kitsch, vulgar sentimentality in the guise of art. [...] [Woody] Allen still cleverly distances himself from the pitfalls of sentimentality and kitsch by balancing his deep respect for the masterpieces that defined the style with his pessimistic distrust of convention and custom that allowed for his earlier films to be unique from and defiant of those kitschy classics from the Golden Age of Hollywood." (<http://www.neoamericanist.org/paper/woody-allen-and-golden-age-kitsch>; lesedato 14.09.16)

"Kitsch is usually defined as imagery which is vapidly sentimental, clumsy, repetitive, cheesy, shallow, pretentious, gaudy, without substance, or as works that have popular appeal or pander to public demand. [...] kitsch as something negative but as something which play on 'simple' or common human emotions. [...] struck a common chord in most of us – and that is actually a very precise definition of kitsch. It is a fact that kitsch has some very strong negative overtones and when dealing with kitsch, you usually end up in a less than fruitful discussion of art vs. anti-art and popular culture vs. highbrow culture, where nobody stops to examine if it might be meaningful to explore the links between the two poles of kitsch and high art. The word 'kitsch' is today widely connected with the tasteless, banal, commercial, sentimental and fake. [...] the schism between art and kitsch is still deeply rooted in our aesthetic approach to the world: art is supposed to be self-reflective and based on a sort of distance that does not satisfy the popular culture's demand of unproblematic and emotional identification with cultural phenomenon." (Matilde Digmann i <http://www.kommunikationsforum.dk/matilde-boye-digmann/blog/kitsch-vs-fine-art-caspar-david-friedrich-walt-disney-and-salvador-dali>; lesedato 05.09.16)

Noen kunstnere beveger seg bevisst mellom kitsch og avantgarde, f.eks. gjelder det amerikaneren Jeff Koons, som er kjent for sine store skulpturer (Dörner og Vogt 2013 s. 152). "Bad taste often passes for avant-garde taste these days – so long as the artist signals "transgressive" intent. And whereas kitsch in art was once to be assiduously disdained, art that traffics in sentimentality and bathos behind a dancing veil of ironic laughter has become highly prized. Jeff Koons, John Currin, Lisa Yuskavage, Richard Prince, and Takashi Murakami are just a few of those who have learned that coy subversion can be popular and lucrative." (<http://www.artnews.com/2012/04/12/when-bad-is-good/>; lesedato 20.09.16)

Justyna Stepień har redigert *Redefining Kitsch and Camp in Literature and Culture* (2014). I bokas introduksjon skriver hun: "Since the advent of postmodern culture, the aesthetics of kitsch and camp have become intriguing sites for analysis in comprehending the cultural landscape of contemporary times. Exposed to the mediated world, the terms have been undergoing constant redefinition, becoming

elusive and often confusing in the context of dynamic cultural processes. Initially rejected and reviled by the purveyors of high culture, who saw them as the antithesis of fine art and an embarrassment to modern culture, due to the acceleration of mass culture trends, the traditionally “lowbrow” aesthetics of kitsch and camp are no longer uniformly vilified. Conversely, the lack of a clear differentiation between high and low culture has enhanced their appeal, whilst simultaneously lauding them as potent and viable sources of artistic inspiration. Having become generators of popular visualization, kitsch and camp transformed the cultural landscape, enriching visual and linguistic spheres with what was formerly only acclaimed as marginal and tasteless. One thing that must be asserted is that contemporary culture does not exist without the consumption of kitsch and camp aesthetics. This is a mutually interdependent and performative relation. As Tomáš Kulka asserts, “kitsch has become an integral part of our modern culture, and it is flourishing now more than ever before. You find it everywhere. It welcomes you to the restaurant, greets you in the bank, and smiles at you from advertising billboards” (16).” (Stępień i <http://www.cambridgescholars.com/download/sample/61815>; lesedato 21.09.16)

Den amerikanske arkitekten Charles Willard Moore stod bak en Piazza d’Italia i New Orleans som var en blanding av renessansestil, barokkstil, gresk agora og romersk forum, og plassen har blitt karakterisert som “til kitschens ære” (Bessières 2011 s. 8).

Den ungarsk-norske maleren Charles Roka “er kjent i de tusen hjem for sine malerier av sigøynerpiken. Roka er selve kitsch-prinsen i Norge.” (*Klassekampen* 3. januar 2003) I komiserien *Fleksnes* (1972 og senere) har ungkaren Marve Fleksnes et “sigøynerkitsch-bilde” av Roka hengende i stua, og dette fungerer i serien som tegn på både hans sensuelle behov og kunstnerisk smakløshet.

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