



ArtTalk: **Is this Art?-What is Art?**  
**For 8/9th Grade and up**

Liam Gillick 21st-century controversial artist

**Start to think about art today!**

Be honest, is it really so difficult to think about art? Is this only an attitude of young teens or a real cultural change? Or don't teenagers see the links between their lives and art forms? In a survey of 13-to-14 year old teens, the majority claimed to have nothing to do with art. Is this really the case? Stop and think! Art can be so much! List three art forms off the top of your head! Write them down here:

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Compare with your neighbour - Did you think of music, dancing, mangas or hip hop? Or maybe videos and/or pc games? These are activities which are fun for teens and sometimes even about art. It is of course a question of quality. Not every MTV video is artistic but there are some videos that connect smart visuals, music and singing in a creative and aesthetic manner which can be considered art. Video art is a new type or "genre" in art. There are other art styles and artists who use new technologies. Liam Gillick, for example, chooses the colors and designs all of his work on a computer before it is made.

Liam Gillick is a British artist with Irish roots who was born in 1964. Like many of today's artists he works in many different media. He makes films, writes books, magazine articles and theatre plays and even produces furniture. A true multi-talent! In his art, sometimes the idea or the concept behind the art work is more important than the art object itself. This kind of art of an art movement from the 1960's and is called "Concept Art". Ideas or concepts play a central role. Gillick invites us to think and talk about his art when we spend time in the exhibition like in the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn. He builds environments in the museum using building materials like aluminium and plexiglass. Artistic environments are designed areas where the artist would like you to participate and deal with the implications of the art work. When you and your class come to the Liam Gillick exhibition, be prepared to move (!) and make exciting links to awesome art!

1. The title of the Liam Gillick exhibition in Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn is: "one long walk ... two short piers"  
The artist often plays with words in his titles. This information is helpful to interpret the meaning of the art work. What do you think this title says about the exhibition and its visitors? Why do you think the artist might have chosen it? Make a cluster around the word "pier". Remember some of your ideas when you come to the show in order to look for connections.

**Vocabulary:** *controversial* – umstritten; *honest* – ehrlich; *attitude* – Einstellung; *cultural change* – Kulturwandlung; *survey* – Umfrage; *claim* – behaupten; *off the top of your head* – spontan; *connect* – verbinden; *aesthetic* – Ästhetik=Lehre vom Schönen; *consider* – betrachten; *genre* – Gattung; *concept* – Konzept; *object* – Objekt; *movement* – Bewegung; *environment* – hier: Umgebung; *deal with the implications* – sich mit den Folgen beschäftigen; *awesome* – klasse; *piers* - Steg.

**The following are general statements about art. Write in short sentences if you agree or disagree and your reasons.**

Here an example: *I agree because ..... Or I disagree because .....*

- Art is beautiful.
- Art has good ideas, it makes me think.
- Art can be aggressive.
- Art must be new.
- Art is about mangas
- Art should be made by hand.
- Art creates emotion.
- Art is expensive.
- Art is creative.
- Art is for everybody.

?????

- 1. Which of these statements is the most important for you? Why? Make a mind map with the statement you picked out in the middle and write down your ideas and/or draw pictures around it. What do these connections say about how you view art?**
- 2. Think of another art form which is not listed but you like or enjoy doing. Or take an idea from the list. Describe in detail why you like it. Make notes. Can your partner guess what it is from your description? Take turns.**