

ICONS ON COTTON PROJECT 2022 SYNOPSIS

The popularity of screen-printed T-shirts, which matured as an art form in the late 1970s, has had a profound and global impact on cultural, political, and artistic development. As heirs to the successes of prominent poster artists, modern T-shirt graphic designers have grown and enhanced that legacy by creating a distinctly new art form. Artistically speaking, the "T-shirt as art" phenomenon should be seen as an extension of that success while expanding their influence dramatically.

This art form consists of inexpensive wearable canvases, artistically inspired graphics, and a multitude of printing processes. These range from centuries old printing techniques, to the high-tech four-color process, dye sublimation, and the state-of-the-art digital printers in use today. High-end printers are also reproducing some of the world's greatest artworks that are proving to be of interest to consumers of visual art today.

T-shirt artists have also turned their creativity loose on a multitude of contemporary iconic subjects. These include people, places, and events of all descriptions, as well as politically, artistically, and commercially driven subjects. Those efforts have coalesced, creating their own cultural niche; recording the breadth and essence of the modern human condition. In doing so, they have blurred the lines between art, craft, culture, and commerce, while creating an eclectic global industry along the way. One that is projected to reach \$30 billion by 2025.

Today, this art form has become more significant, global, and ubiquitous than the early poster artists could have ever envisioned. T-shirt artists create mobile works of art that turn the "Public Square" into the world's most visited and unique art gallery. Over time, T-shirt graphics have become the most creative, diverse, and universally dominant form of public art.

My intention for this thesis is to present a compelling narrative based on the printed images themselves and the genres' shared elements. One that celebrates both poster and T-shirt artists, while promoting the latter's own remarkable but as yet underappreciated legacy.

WEBSITE: [ICONS ON COTTON](https://www.iconsoncotton.com)
