

A crash course in Art History

A crash course in Art History to inspire us all.

I know it sounds boring and tedious. Well! It generally is, but I am giving you the 10-cent tour of 19th/20th Century Art. The point of this article is to provide insight into how art actually arrived here in its present state.

While walking through a gallery the other day it occurred to me how much stuff I had seen before. Some things popped out at me while others just taunted me with familiarity. I discovered nothing was new.

I was seeing different combinations of the same themes over and over again. Don't get me wrong, that is what artists have been left with and that is what we do. Technology has provided artists with a vast array of tools to create art with and we are becoming very skilled at using them. Tools such as the Internet has made it easier to create art in a manner that no longer serves traditional art forms. I'm a traditionalist at heart and I think electronic media is a huge asset and artists should use whatever tools are at their disposal.

My question is, have we forgotten the essential elements that make great art great? Does the contributions of artists Like Da Vinci, and Picasso mean anything any more or has media/technology changed everything?

Does media imitate art or does art imitate media?

I will be taking a look at Art History as it was meant to. I think we can gather a lot of information about contemporary movements just by looking at some of the players over the past 2 Centuries.

There is a certain historical lineage that delivers a very clear and congruent vision of how art and artists have been affected by the world around them.

Social and political awareness has always driven art. The diverse qualities of culture are embedded in an artist's psyche and have had a profound influence on how and why artists make art.

I think media and art have become one in the same and yet, where it all came from has been forgotten.

That brings me back to "nothing is new";

Because art is about "seeing"; my reference to various periods of art has been reduced to images with no description. In most cases the titles and artists names have been removed as to enhance the experience of familiarity. Some pieces you may recognize and others you will be seeing for the first time. Every image has been placed under its respective heading.

The 3 categories in art.

Avant-garde

Modernism

Western Art is the art of European Countries and is influenced by Ancient civilizations like the Middle East, Egypt, Aegean civilizations dating back to 3rd millennium B.C. Rome and Ancient Greece was the precipitous for artistic development Europe.

Avante-garde comes from the French and means "advance guard";

The English form refers to people or art that is experimental in nature.

Although the reference is to art it can be reflected in culture, politics, music, theatre ect……

Avante-garde pushes the boundaries as what is accepted as the norm. Avante-garde artists hugely influenced Modernism.

Modernism has a very broad view of art through modern thought, character and practice. Modernism was an effort in the late 19 century to move away from "traditional" forms of art, architecture, religion and social structures to make room for a more advanced industrial society. A renewal of how artists and society would view art became a work in progress, which continues to influence art today.

I think the art of 19th and 20th Century's seemed to spur many schools of thought that evoked a natural evolution from commissions for church and state to independent thought for creating art.

It is clear that what we see today is more than just evolved technique but the evolution of the creative process and how art is seen.

Listed in chronological order I have selectively chosen some styles/schools that convey the true spirit of the art and artists. What we see in art today is an expression of what came before and will continue to influence art and artists in the 21st and 22 nd century.

19th Century

Neo-Classicism

Romanticism

Realism

Symbolism

Impressionism

Began as an association of Paris-based artists and was prominent in the 1870's and 1890's. Open Composition is the main characteristic of this painting style with an emphasis on light, changing time and movement. Claude Monet & "Impression, Sunrise";

Post Impressionism

1910- The development of French art since Manet. The continuation of vivid impressionist colours and thick application of paint with an inclination to distort form.

Neo-Impressionism

Art Nouveau

20th Century

Fauvism

Paris Salon d'automne 1905-1908
Les Fauves (the wild beasts)
The main artists; Matisse, Marquet, Derain, Roualt.

Cubism

The parent of all abstract art forms
Influenced by Cezanne.
Main players; Picasso & Braque
3 phases of Cubism

1906- 1909- Cezanne.
1909-1912- High phase (analytical)
1912-1914- Late phase (synthetic)

Futurism

Expressionism

Originated in Germany in the early 20th Century
& "Being alive"; an emotional experience rather than physical reality. Distortions of reality for emotional effect.
Many art forms including: painting, literature, theatre, film, architecture and music.

Artists such as Matthias, Grunewald and El Greco were expressionists.

Dadaism

A cultural movement that began in Zurich, Switzerland 1916-1922.

Rejected prevailing standards in art and was generally perceived as an anti-art cultural movement.

Anti-war, anti-bourgeois and anarchistic in nature. Hugo Ball, Emmy Hennings, Tristan Tzara, Jean Arp, Marcel Janco, Richard Huelsenbeck, Sophie Täuber, Hans Richter,

New York Artists

Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia met American artist Man Ray

Berlin

Grosz, John Heartfield,

Paris

Guillaume Apollinaire, André Breton, Max Jacob, Clément Pansaers, and other French writers, critics and artists.

Tokyo

Founded by Tomoyoshi Murayama and Yanase Masamu.

Surrealism

A cultural movement that began in the 1920's.

Surrealist works feature elements of surprise and unexpected juxtapositions.

Surrealism developed out of DADA.

Andre's Breton

Abstract Expressionism

Pop Art

21st Century

Relational Art