

Abstract Expressionism Movement the beginning of Postmodern Painting

Research submitted by

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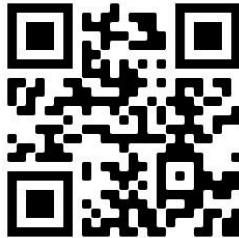
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Research problem: What are the plastic values that Abstract Expressionism added to the painting in postmodern era?

The importance of the research: represents an attempt to lay down concepts and foundations in the works of postmodern Abstract Expressionism ;it allows students, art connoisseurs, and those interested in this field to gain insight into the aesthetic and structural relationship to it.

Research objective: Highlighting the artistic and aesthetic values of the Abstract Expressionism School to create a pictorial painting.

Research Methodology: Descriptive and Analytical, Research Frontiers: The 1940's in the United States of America.

Search terms:

Abstract Expressionism: A movement that appeared in New York City in the 1940's, which emphasized spontaneous personal expression, free artistic values, technical treatments of drawing, self-representation of drawing, drawing quickly, emphasizing feelings , and on gestures, and how to draw automatically, also known as (Mechanism) to avoid rational observation, or (macular) a reference to the shape of spots on the surface of the painting, as it was called in America by the name (rational photography) or (kinetic photography) or (kinetic), and there are other phrases or terms that have their own significance within this comprehensive movement Such as (pictures - walls) (structural panels), (monochrome), (linguistic photography).(

Postmodern painting: It includes trends of Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Miniaturization, Conceptual Art, Visual Art, Neo Expressionism, Neo Realism, Superrealism, Digital Painting.

Research introduction:

After the end of the Second World War in 1945, the visual arts anchored on a new path of development. In the last fifty years

of the twentieth century, artistic trends appeared and disappeared in rapid succession, and some artists adopted theory after another in a way that made it difficult for critics To place them in a specific place among the schools to which they belong - the state of ambiguity and conflict in opinions and ideas of intellectual innovations, led to most of the previous artistic rules and traditions aside, and was clearly reflected in the arts, and in the change in aesthetic theories. The artist of that period was associated with society, as he produced art to raise the astonishment and attention of the community or the public, and open intellectual dialogue to the recipient. Whatever he objected to modern concepts or new artistic attempts and experiments, they are of great value, as they represent the fact of expressing the emotions of the modern man, and the artist's response to all intellectual variables of the manifestations and problems of his time. Postmodern arts have gone through a series of small artistic movements, one of which followed. The other at an accelerated pace. It was followed by Abstract Expressionism, collocation, pop art, visual art, kinetic art, minimal art, earth art. etc.

These works have branched out and expanded in different directions, dividing them systematically into two main directions. The first: includes works of painting that maintain the independence of the painting and its unique presence within the historical series that has been shaped by humanity over the ages.

The second: To give the theatrical character of the artistic work, which sought to overlap the performing arts with the plastic arts, and to mix between theater and photography.

And "Clement Greenberg, one of the most important advocates and theorists of American modernism, believes that abstract photography in America continued after the Second World War through continuous self-criticism in crystallizing modernist characteristics in plastic art . Greenberg stresses the importance of the artistic legacy inherited by artists. Americans

are European painters based on their belief that large and important works in art are often not achieved in general without a deep understanding of previous artistic periods and their complete digestion.

The works of some painters in the 1940's and 1950's - such as those of Arshille Gorky, Willem de kooning and Jackson Pollock, have continued on the path to searching for the applicable essence in collages that are concerned with works of the past and showing it below the surface. 1... Then came the quiet formal abstractions in the paintings of the late 1950s and 1960s artists to broaden the scope of this research process again and add important contributions. 1 When painters such as Kenneth Noland, Clifford Still and Barnett Newman rejected Barnett Newman, Morris Louis and others were the Abstract Expressionist doctrine, and they were able to prove that the essence without which the art of painting is not achieved consists of two traditions or two rules for a third of them, namely: the surfaces and the demarcation of these terms..

These works necessarily fall under the first direction of postmodern art, whose basic structure is the colors and lines As well as concern for the complete separation between the different arts as a prerequisite for every art to fulfill itself. The art of drawing was not an art if it departed from the general tradition of the shape of the art painting in isolation from the vocabulary of formation and the formulation of the style it takes. Likewise, criticism sought to confirm this unique characteristic of the art of painting, and gave judgments in light of the approach of the divisions on which painting was based on the date of its independence

Abstract expressionism - 1946:

"Although the term abstract expressionism was first applied to American art in 1946 by the art critic Robert Coates, it was used

¹ - Postmodernism and the Performing Arts:: Nick Kai, translated by: Prof. Dr. Nohad Saliha, The Egyptian General Book Authority, second edition, 1999: p. 34. 35

for the first time in Germany in 1919 CE in Der Sturm magazine, in relation to German Expressionism, In the United States, Alfred Barr was the first to use this term in 1929².

Technically it is the predecessor to Surrealism, with an emphasis on spontaneity or unconscious creativity, and movement is a name derived from a combination of emotional intensity and self-denial of German Expressionists, with the anti-pictorial aesthetic of European schools of abstraction such as Futurism, Bauhaus and Synthetic Cubism, in addition to being an image as Rebellious, anarchist, very weird, and make some people feel nihilistic³.

Abstract Expressionism arose during World War II, and it began to be displayed during the early forties in galleries in New York. "It quickly spread throughout the United States, and was concentrated in New York City from 1946 to 1960⁴, For the first time in years, American artists have a model of their own, and historians have said that the movement is reconsidering the method of attracting attention, and that it represents the United States as a haven for free thought, as well as a challenge to all methods of socialist realism prevalent in communist countries and the dominance of European art markets.⁵

The artists of Abstract Expressionism have contributed to the cohesion of the art of photography with the art of prominent sculpture, as they developed some of their two-dimensional pictorial works into three-dimensional pictorial works, either using dense color, or using other stereoscopic materials, such as the use of sticks, processors, knives, and liquid distilled dye or

² - Hess, Barbara; "Abstract Expressionism", 2005

³ - Shapiro, David/Cecile (2000): Abstract Expressionism. The politics of apolitical painting. p. 189-190 In: Frascina, Francis (2000): Pollock and After. The critical debate. 2nd ed. London: Routledge .

⁴ - Serge Gibalt. How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art, University of Chicago Press, 1983 .

⁵ - Catherine de Zegher and Hendel Teicher (eds.). 3 X Abstraction. NY: The Drawing Center and /New Haven: Yale University Press. 2005.

heavy paint with sand and glass. Smashers, household items, plastic wrap, or any other foreign material added. Then came Post-Painterly Abstraction, a continuation of Abstract Expressionism. ⁶

By exploring gestures, lines, form, and color, many expressionist abstract artists hoped to elicit strong emotional reactions. Their large paintings created an overwhelming viewing experience and, for some, quasi-religious. Mark Rothko famously said that his paintings should be viewed from a distance of 18 inches, perhaps to control the viewer's field of view, thereby creating a feeling of contemplation and beyond ⁷. Scale drawing is a hallmark of Abstract Expressionism. Influenced by the experience of mural paintings for the Federal Art Project of the New Deal, a number of artists continued to prefer monumental paintings that almost engulf the viewer.

The expressionists showed themselves as pioneers of a new art, and this is what Clifford Steele's eloquent and romantic phrase shows, "It was a journey, but one has to take it alone, taking a bold step forward." Abstract Expressionism represented the United States in its vastness, its large paintings are a reflection of the expanse of the United States from the ocean The Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, this homeland that gathers within it all ethnic, color, geographic, cultural and religious differences. Despite this, they are subject to a unified law, and they study in the same institutes and speak one language, "English". Their ambition was to bring their art to the universalism, universality and superior originality.

Abstract art invites the artist and the viewer to meet. While the artist expresses his feelings and conveys his sense of being in the work, the viewer's perception is the final element in the mix. Pollock said in 1950 that abstract painting "faces you". As

⁶ Rachel Barnes: "The 20th Century Art Book", London Phaidon, 1996, p.508

⁷ -https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/abstract-expressionism/the-sublime-and-the-spiritual/

exemplified by Rothko Church in Houston, the intensity of this encounter can be heightened by the way the work is presented.

Abstract Expressionism emphasized the depiction of feelings rather than objects. Most of the painters of the movement preferred large works on canvas, bright colors, and loose brushes. It is seen as combining the emotional appeal and self-expression of German Expressionists with the anti-imaginative aesthetic of European abstract schools such as the Bauhaus and Futurism. Cubism, and specifically Pablo Picasso, was also a great influence in the idea of dividing representational beings into basic geometric shapes. Abstract Expressionism emphasized accidents and spontaneity in their work, but usually very planned to implement them. Mistakes made during the drawing process were used in the artist's favor. Hans Hoffmann and Arshil Gorky were essential in drawing attention to the possibility of expression in the abstraction and the basic physicality of paint. Abstract Expressionism can be broadly divided into two groups: kinematics and color field. 8

Action Painting: The term Action Painting was first used in 1952 by art critic Harold Rosenberg to describe the works of painters Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline, and Willem de Kooning. Artists drip, throw, splatter, and pour paint onto the surface using various tools such as meatballs, bits of wood, or sticks, along with photography with traditional brushes and palette knives. The painting was seen as an arena, and the process was an epic struggle between man and matter. Painting has become an illogical, instinctive and impulsive part of existence that represents the energy and the soul of the artist. Thus the action of cinematography became the form and effect of the living body, transmitting movement and intense movement. Jackson Pollock

<http://www.abstractexpressionism.net/abstract-expressionism-style-definition--8emotion.html>

sometimes dresses differently and invites spectators to watch the action 9 .

Abstract Expressionism painters discovered new ways of creating art, revitalizing and rejuvenating the medium. They changed the nature of photography with their large, abstract paintings, active and gestural lines, and new artistic processes. Many artists have experimented with unconventional materials, such as commercial paints and home insulation brushes. Artists have also developed new techniques for applying paint, such as moving the canvas from easel to floor and working on canvas that is not stretched or diagonal. With these unconventional methods of painting, Abstract Expressionists sought new forms of self-expression and personal freedom in their work. ¹⁰

Color field Painting: Color field artists, such as Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Helen Frankenthaler, Kenneth Knowland, and Clifford Steele, moved towards an impersonal and intellectual aesthetic. Focusing on what they considered to be the basic formal elements of color field painting, Marc Rothko's abstract painting is unmodulated pure color spaces; Two-dimensional flat space; Huge scale and different shape of the fabric itself. These artists focused on the lyrical effects of large expanses of color, often casting or dyeing onto canvas. Often the shades of the color were diluted to sink into the fabric. The goal was to eliminate all obstacles between the artist and the idea, and between the idea and the viewer. There is no attempt to represent in the narrative sense; Subject is color. ¹¹

⁹ <http://www.abstractexpressionism.net/action-painting-art-definition.html>

¹⁰ - https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/abstract-expressionism/the-processes-and-materials-of-abstract-expressionist-painting/

¹¹ <http://www.abstractexpressionism.net/color-field-painting-art-definition.html>

Some critics, such as Robert Rosenblum, considered the expression of abstractionism in sublime art as a continuation of the ideals of the Romanticists. Romanticism was an artistic and literary movement of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries that focused on the aesthetic experience and the emotions it evoked. In 1948, Newman wrote an essay entitled "The Sublime is Now", in which he asserted that America is the place where artists finally achieve sublime art: "Instead of taking cathedrals out of Christ or man or" life, "we are making them from ourselves, from Our own feelings." ¹

Post-graphic abstraction: artists looking forward to development, creativity and innovation were eager to discard the idea of colored or painted cloth as a means of what they wanted to do or express. This also led to a shift in interest to a large extent towards that innate sense of prominent sculpture, and it also led to an increase in experiments based on mixed media - that is, the mixing of different materials, materials and colors of painting in a single plastic artwork ¹².

Abstract Expressionism was distinguished by the clarity of the subject element, the emphasis on spontaneity, the automaticity and the unconscious, with the use of lines in density and clarity of spaces and spaces, and unity between forms; However, it was distinguished by the repetitive rhythm and continuity associated with achieving movement on the design surface.

And although the Abstract Expressionists were friends, colleagues, and lovers, each artist had their own unique style. Unlike what happened before with Cubism and Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism did not appear to follow a specific formula. This diversity is a celebration of the individual artist's freedom to express himself.

¹² . - Art Movements After World War II, Edward Lucy Smith: Translated by Fakhri Khalil, House of Cultural Affairs, Baghdad, 1995, pp. 90-140 with adaptation.

Among its artists are Hans Hofmann 1880-1966, Adolph Gottlieb 1903-1974, Mark Rothko 1903-1970, Willem de Kooning 1904-1997, Clayford Steele, Clyfford Still. 1904-1980), (Barnett Newman 1905-1970), (Franz Kline 1910-1962), Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985), (Jackson Pollock 1912-1956) (Norman Bluhm) 1921-1999, Ernest Briggs, Norman Lewis 1909-1979, Robert Motherwell 1915-1991, Frank Stella 1936-, Ad Reinhardt 1913-1967, Ad Reinhardt, Hedda Sterne 1910-2011, Archil Gorky 1904-1948 Arshile Gorky, Jimmy Ernst, Bradly Walker, James Brooks 1940-James Brooks, Richard Pousetti, 1916-1992 Richard Pousette-Dart William Baziotos 1912-1963 William Baziotos, Theodore Stamos, Theodoros Stamos, and others.

Jackson Pollock: He is considered the most famous of the abstract expressionists, and is famous for his large wall paintings (Figure 1). When the fabric is laid on the floor, Pollock drips, stains, extrudes, and stains on all sides. But despite the look of his automatic paintings, Pollock, like other Abstract Expressionists, maintained a balance of chaos and control. For example, Franz Kline's large black and white paintings seem impulsive and full of energy, but he often does a quick sketch or sketch to compose first. Bullock claimed to have maintained control when making his drip paintings.



Figure (1) Jackson Pollock, Summer Time, 1948.

Clyfford, Rothko, and Newman developed an original and distinct style like Pollock, but their attention was focused on color, as they worked to enlarge the visual and emotional impact of color, so they excluded representation and symbolism and simplified the drawing and suppressed the extreme contrast between the degrees of light and shadow, filling the large canvas with monochromatic areas influenced Eye the viewer and hold his breath by controlling him fully in the color environment.

Steele painted the open, extended abstract fields - which represent the geography of his country in his artistic unconscious - his paintings consisted of spaces covered with color with a perimeter of organic lines resembling a flame or a halo (Figure 2). 13

¹³ - American Art in the 20th century. Painting and Sculpture 1913-1993. Royal Academy of Arts ,London,1993 - .p80



Figure (2) Clyfford Still, D No. 1957, oil on canvas, 113 x 159 in, Buffalo, New York



Mark Rothko: Mark Rothko next to his paintings any outlines, leaving the surface atmosphere extending without borders continuously and with abstract colors, his paintings consist of calm colors with extended airy bright angles, so that the color swims symmetrically over the other, and the light color is often above the dark color layer, and here he means The artist is to liberate the viewer from his daily existence and troubles and elevate him above his usual experiences to a state of sublimation of thought where spiritual awareness can be liberated Figure (3).

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Figure (3) Mark Rothko, orange and yellow, 1956, oil on canvas, New York.

¹⁴ - American art .p81

Barnett Newman: After World War II, many new forms of abstract art developed. Many artists allowed their artistic styles to reflect the horror of war and the Holocaust. Other artists sought to keep art separate from the influence of war. Others, such as Barnett Newman, have attempted to redefine beauty and lift the spirit of people affected by war. As a leader in the Abstract Expressionist movement, Newman believed that the duty of a postwar artist was to express the celestial and provide a new example for people who had endured such a bleak period of time. In his book *The Sublime Is Now*, Newman wrote: "I think that some of us here in America, free from the weight of European culture, find the answer, by completely denying that art has any interest in the problem of beauty and where to find it." Newman thought it was not a responsibility. Art defining beauty. Instead, he believed that art should convey great ideas and great experiences that foster metaphysical thinking and revelation.

Newman is classified as one of the pioneers of the American Abstract Expressionism movement. However, Newman refrained from declaring his style as any particular classification. Newman, in his paintings, developed the concept of "zip", a thin strip of contrasting colors, and used this feature in the majority of his work. Many of Newman's paintings were large, solid-colored fields with one or more "zip codes" representing objects that interact with and encounter them. In *Cathedra*, Newman displays this design.

Barnett Newman formulated his paintings by placing an abstract color field consisting of one color interrupted by one or two stripes of another color perpendicularly. The function of these vertical lines is to spare the paintings lethargy or lack of form.¹⁵

The *Cathedra* figure (4) was made to represent the God of Israel in the Old Testament. The dark blue color represents the presence in

¹⁵ - American Art in the 20th century. Painting and Sculpture 1913-1993. Royal Academy of Arts ,London,1993 - .p81

the presence of kings. Pure white "zip" divides the canvas asymmetrically. Newman intended to confront his paintings in the same way as someone else. The viewer can accomplish this by standing directly in front of the canvas and overcoming it with the painting. In the Cathedra, one feels the tremendous weight of the blue, and the white "zip" denotes an incalculable higher power and thus incomprehensible. 16



Figure (4) Barnett Newman, Cathedra, 1951, oil and acrylic on canvas.

ERNEST BRIGGS: Born in San Francisco in 1923. Briggs sought inspiration from nature. He conveyed the changing qualities of the natural world through his coarse and expressive brushes (Figure 5). Briggs, the second generation of Abstract Expressionists, represents "kinematics". His paintings are vivid. It provides viewers with a mysterious and recognizable experience. 17

¹⁶ <http://europeanartincontext.blogspot.com/2015/03/cathedra-1951-barnett-newman-1905-1970.html>

¹⁷ https://www.1stdibs.com/art/paintings/abstract-paintings/ernest-briggs-ernest-briggs-untitled-oil-on-canvas-1959/id-a_3493231/

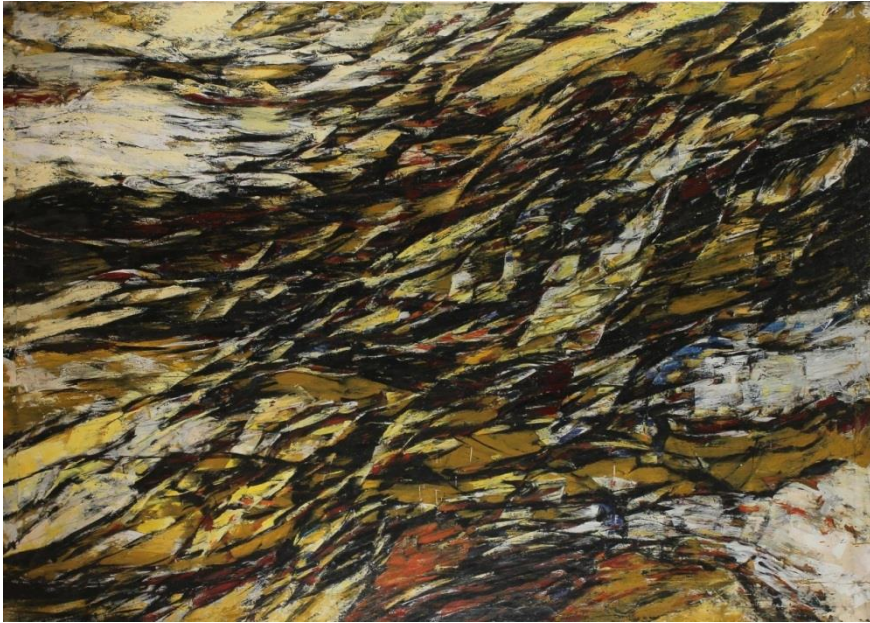


Figure (5) ERNEST BRIGGS (1923-1984), untitled, 1955, oil on canvas, 125 "x 89"

Adolph Gottlieb: He was a key figure in mid-twentieth century abstraction. His paintings are emotional, sparse, and primitive, when Gottlieb developed his symbolic imagery, he became involved in the process of simplification. During that process he came to a series of works he called "Imaginary Landscapes". In contrast to the avatars, which did not clearly focus on any one part of the image, Gottlieb divided the plane of the image in these panels into two distinct areas by inserting a horizon line. Below the line, Gottlieb added pictorial scribbles. Above the line, he added colored geometric shapes (6). Fictional landscapes suggested a hierarchical relationship between the two types of images. Depicted as a submissive is a mythical, emotional, and complex expression of human anxiety. Hovering above is a simple and direct expression of universal purity.

The fairy-tale landscape has become simpler in what Gottlieb called explosive paintings. In these works, he discarded the horizon, but kept the scribbling at the bottom and the uniform at

the top. The bursts used large fields of color, and combined the color element with the shape element. They called meditation on an almost sacred level, and seemed to convey the concept of a symbiotic relationship between some higher and lower consciousness. 18



Figure (6) Adolph Gottlieb, Three cylinders, 1960, oil on canvas, Museum of American Art

¹⁸ <https://www.ideelart.com/magazine/adolph-gottlieb>



Figure (7) Hans Hofmann, Pompeii, 1959, oil on canvas, 2140 x 1327 mm.

Pompeii is a large abstract oil painting made in New York in 1959 by German-born abstract expressionist Hans Hoffmann. It is one of the artist's works, "tiles or panels", a type of painting that Hoffmann developed in the last decade of his career, in which he painted rectangles compacted on top of each other with dense layers of paint surrounded by fluid fields of color (Figure 7).

Ad Reinhardt: Influenced by Stuart Davis' paintings inspired by Cubism, Reinhardt's early works were distinguished by being covered in colorful and asymmetric geometries, such as number 43 (abstract painting, yellow) (1947) fig (8).. Reinhardt's collage

Hans Hofmann:

Hoffmann tended to synthesize his paintings by fixing the shapes of colored paper to his canvas. His work is a synthesis of Cubism, Fauvism and Geometric Abstraction. He regularly raised nature but was keen to respect the inherent differences between pictorial experiences and experiences of the natural world. He wrote: "In nature, light creates color: in the image, color creates light."



posters are similarly complex in which layers of printed paper are cut and pasted into irregular straight shapes. His own influence on minimalism emanates from his later monochrome paintings, most notably a series of black abstracts that abandoned gestures in favor of sleek brush strokes and subtle, sometimes barely noticeable, brush strokes

Figure (8) Ad Reinhardt, No. 43 (Yellow Abstract Illustration) 1947, oil on canvas, 101.7 x 81.2 cm

Research results: Among the most important characteristics of the School of Abstract Expressionism:

-Enlarging the canvas area, allowing more freedom and movement.

-Bold composition and color

-Emotional and spontaneous brushstrokes or pouring color and drip directly onto the fabric

I made scenes part of the art.

-The painting process itself is characterized by individuality, humanity and interaction with photography, as in the rituals of primitive art

-In the painting of Abstract Expressionism, there is a kinetic action of line and color, and a counter reaction to it, which creates a space of various values, and is activated by the phenomenological technique of composition.

- There is a diversification in the structure of the subconscious in the painting of Abstract Expressionism, in terms of the degree of displacement in the iconography of the image, and the intensification of the use of the elements of composition (linear, color, directional and spatial) 19

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