

Group Discussion

The Aestheticians

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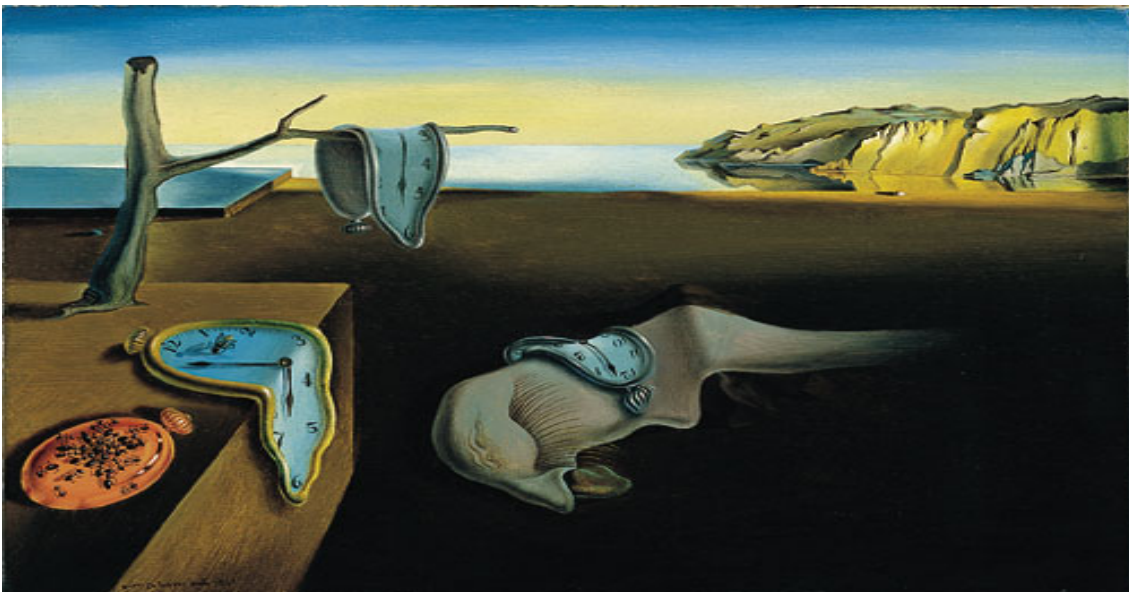
The 20th Century Modernist Art Movement

1900-1930-- An immense change in the way people looked at the world at the turn of the century led to a change in the way artists represented the world. The figurative tradition, in which artists based art on the human figure and daily routines completely changed with the onset of the 20th century. Many different art movements propagated in this era .

Like **Surrealism**:

“Pure, psychic automatism, through which one seeks to express the real course of one's thinking orally, on paper or in any other way. Instinctive thinking without any control by reason and outside all aesthetic or ethical considerations.”

The Surrealism art movement incorporates elements of fantasy and random objects with dream like imagery. Often these compositions ask the viewer to rethink art, [Salvador Dali](#) was best known for his surrealism paintings, his work often combines outdoor scenes with unusual items. Such as the painting featured "The Persistence Of Memory".



The Persistence of Memory was finished in 1931 - after World War I and before World

War II and the Spanish Civil War. The barren landscape of this painting shows what a world before war would look like. The landscape could also be interpreted as life after all wars, after all humans have died. Whatever the case, the land is still there while the humans have disappeared. The forgotten memories of previous wars would finally lead to the one war that would destroy humanity.

The Persistence of Memory is aptly named, for the scene is indelibly memorable. Hard objects become inexplicably limp in this bleak and infinite dreamscape, while metal attracts ants like rotting flesh. Mastering what he called "the usual paralyzing tricks of eye-fooling," Dali painted with what he called "the most imperialist fury of precision," but only, he said, "to systematize confusion and thus to help discredit completely the world of reality." It is the classical Surrealist ambition, yet some literal reality is included too: the distant golden cliffs are the coast of Catalonia, Dali's home.

The only objects in the painting that resemble humanity are the "melting" clocks. As objects move, according to Einstein's theory, their length contracts or warps. This revelation may have inspired the deformed or melting clocks that are displayed in Dali's original painting. Those limp watches are as soft as overripe cheese—indeed "the camembert of time," in Dali's phrase. Here time must lose all meaning. Permanence goes with it: ants, a common theme in Dali's work, represent decay, particularly when they attack a gold watch, and become grotesquely organic. The monstrous fleshy creature draped across the painting's center is at once alien and familiar: an approximation of Dali's own face in profile, its long eyelashes seem disturbingly insect like or even sexual, as does what may or may not be a tongue oozing from its nose like a fat snail.

Melting clocks , ants on metal this seems maddening doesn't it ?

Well my friend as Salvador Dali himself said :

"The only difference between me and a madman is that I am not mad" - Salvador Dali (1904-1989).

This was hilarious but I still feel that the movement that contributed more to the modernist art movement was Cubism.

Cubism

Cubism, another modern art movement, was primarily restricted to painting and sculpture. Nevertheless it had a major influence on the development of modern art. Cubism was initiated by the Spaniard Pablo Picasso and the Frenchman Georges Braques in Paris before World War I. Paul Cezanne, usually categorized as a Post-Impressionist, can be considered as their predecessor. Cubism had strong roots in African tribal art. In cubism, geometrical forms and fragmentations are favored. Everything is reduced to cubes and other geometrical forms. Often several aspects of one subject are shown simultaneously. As famous artists besides Pablo Picasso and Georges Braques, Robert Delaunay, Marcel Duchamp, Juan Gris and Lyonel Feininger are to be mentioned. Cubism paved the way for abstract art.

Picasso started painting a new style shortly after the rose period called "cubism" in which

the artist would view an object or subject from several angles and paint them simultaneously, the result as seen in the art prints and paintings below is sharp angles and strong developed geometric patterns. Picasso was for a time saluted as a forerunner of surrealism, but his intellectual approach was basically antithetical to the irrational aesthetic to the surrealist painters.

"Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." (Picasso)

"Youth has no age." (Picasso)

Guernica by Pablo Picasso



This huge composition, prompted by the Spanish Civil War expresses in complex and personal symbolic iconography the artist's abhorrence of the violence and beastliness of war. Most people are aware the painting is the artist's protest against the Nazi bombing of the Basque village of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War, but how many can 'read' the symbolic imagery of the work? What is the importance of the seemingly unrelated images of the bull, the fallen warrior, the horse and the weeping woman to Picasso's central theme? It is due in part to the work of historians, critics and aestheticians, that the iconography of Guernica is made comprehensible. Their research results in the articulation of the symbolic meaning embodied in the work, and together with a formal analysis of the visual elements provides the viewer with important insights into the artistic process from inception of the idea to the completed art work.

Anyone can point to the work as an example of Picasso's resentment of Franco and his Nazi allies and the capacity of visual art to express anguish or to be used as a protest against the inhumanity of war. However, an act of creative criticism is required to connect the forms one sees with the specific meanings or answers that the total work appears to support. This encompasses questions that explore meaning in the painting, focus attention on the sensory, formal, technical and expressive qualities of the painting, and may set the work within a context of the artist's personal style and broader social and cultural influences.

CONCLUSION To G.D.

[Dali](#) and [Picasso](#) are two masters who stand at the vanguard of two opposite approaches to art in the Twentieth Century: To use that accumulated knowledge and build upon it, or to discard it.

Dali embraced all the science of painting as a way to study the psyche through subconscious images. He called this process the Paranoiac Critical Method. As any paranoiac, the artist should allow these images to reach the conscience, and then do what the paranoiac cannot do: Freeze them on canvas to give consciousness the opportunity to comprehend their meaning. Later on, he expanded the process into the Oniric-Critical Method, in which the artist pays attention to his dreams, freezing them through art, and analyzing them as well. As Freud said, "A dream that is not interpreted is like a letter that is not opened."

Picasso took the opposite approach to art. He inherited the gusto for ugliness, scandal and chaos of the Dada movement and the automatic surrealists. Picasso rejected the craft to become "primitive," deciding that the ingenuity of childhood is the basis of art. To him this meant that the less the artist is preoccupied with his craft the better his art. To Dali, however, the "ingenuity of childhood" meant keeping an open mind and maintaining the curiosity and excitement of the child throughout one's life, not painting as a child.

Thank you

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