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How Cubism affects the way we view Realism and Perspective

In this paper I will be writing about how cubism has affected the art world and the way that we the viewers now look perspective and realism art like Traditional Renaissance. Cubism is an art movement that was introduced in the early 20th century. It was created by European painters and Sculptors Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque in 1907. Both of them had taken influence from some of Paul Cézanne work that was shown at the Salon d'Automne in 1907.

Later on in the year of “1907 Georges Braque visited Pablo Picasso’s studio. This studio visit marked the beginning of one of the most important friendships in the history of art. Over the next few months and years the two artists shared their ideas, scrutinized each other’s work, challenged and encouraged each other.”(Source 3) that is when they had started to invent a new and different style of painting which is what became Cubism. Cubist painters wanted to create a new style of painting that show people how things really are not just try to make them look like what we see. The cubist painters felt that the Traditional Renaissance paintings gave a type of illusion that is known as trickery because it doesn't give a real experience of what the eye is seeing it just tries to make things look like the way they look not how they are seen. Cubism had ditched perspective and realism, and was considered “a revolutionary new style of painting which transformed everyday objects, landscapes, and people into geometric shapes.”(Source 3). Cubism was created as a rejection to the traditional Renaissance

paintings. The Cubists felt that they were capable of giving the lookers a more accurate understanding of objects, landscapes or people by showing it from several different angles or viewpoints at the same time. They would use flat geometric shapes to represent the different sides and angles of the objects, this is how cubists said they suggested three-dimensional qualities and structure without using techniques like the horizon line/ vanishing point, shading and other methods of perspective. They would break down the objects that they saw in the real world into flat surface, so they felt the paintings should behave like there on one instead of trying to imitate or try to pretend to be a window, but should show how objects are seen on a flat two-dimensional surface the geometric shapes really emphasized the two-dimensional flatness of the canvas that the cubists believed to be the important part of the painting. The Traditional Renaissance paintings were not like that at all and focused very much on being very realistic and trying to replicate what the human eye sees. Renaissance art is described as an “emphasized both the technique of perspective and a fusion of science and art” (p.457). Perspective is the art technique for creating the illusion of three-dimensional on a two-dimensional surface. Renaissance painters tried to create realistic and accurate figures, forms and shapes. Realism is the attempt to represent a subject matter as close as possible to what the human eye sees. The purpose for making paintings like this is to make objects look as close to real as possible and also to make paintings real and believable. The churches were some of the people who used it to try and make their religions and stories more believable, that is one of the reasons the Cubists felt it was considered trickery.

Paul Cézanne was born on January 19th, 1839 in Aix-en-Provence, France. Cézanne was a post-impressionist French painter. He was said to “be the one who can be said to have formed the bridge between late 19th century Impressionism and the early 20th century's new line of artistic inquiry, Cubism (source 2). He was a great

influence for Picasso and Braque. Cézanne was known for having a varieties of styles that he had done threw over the years. His painting “A Modern Olympia” (see fig.1) started to show a more abstract way of painting and more geometric shapes and flatter forms. Also “The Grounds of the Château-Noir” (see fig.2) has a much similar fee to (fig.1) they both have a darker color pallet and use more simple flatter geometric shapes than his other Post-Impressionist paintings did, though a lot of his work did seem to have a more simple and two-dimensional than other painters in his time but his work was still looked more realistic and had elements of perspective. These two figures show that is work is starting to lose the idea of perspective, and the shapes have a feel to them that make them look as if they are moving, which helps back the idea that cubist wanted to express the idea that the human eye sees multiple views and angles and time and space around them is still moving. The sketchy looking out line around most of his shapes in the picture make it look as if they can't stay still. Paul Cézanne did not consider himself a cubist but his later work definitely paved a bit of a path for Cubism, both Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque said that Cézanne's late work greatly influenced them to invent a new style of painting which they called Cubism.

Pablo Picasso was born on October 25th, 1881 in Malaga Spain. He was a very talented and influential artist from the 20th century along with being the cow-founder of Cubism with Braque he was also a terrific painter who had multiple different styles he was also, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist and stage designer. Picasso was capable of a lot of great art. Picasso's piece called Les Demoiselles d'Avignon(see in fig.3) Is considered a huge break through from traditional composition and perspective in painting like the Renaissance era. This Painting was the start to the Cubist style. There are 5 naked women in the picture, some of the women are overlapping each other but there isn't a huge sense of perspective there is no vanishing point or any shading on the women that would represent three-dimensional forms, the woman also all seem to be

the same size even though some should be bigger or smaller than the others sense some are hinted to be farther back or farther forward in the picture, but Cubism was eliminating some of those old principles. The cloth in the background seems to have a tiny bit of lights and darks but seems to be a more abstract form but also seems to feel like there is movement in them. Picasso had flattened out everything in this picture made everything visible for the eye up turning and showing what was on it which looks to be grapes and some other fruits. "These strategies would be significant in Picasso's subsequent development of Cubism, charted in this gallery with a selection of the increasingly fragmented compositions he created in this period" (source 4). A lot of Picasso's early Cubist paintings were very dark, featuring a lot of cooler colors, such as blues, greens and greys. He would have some warm colors but they were most pale and faded, this work had a lot of straight hard line that depicted figures and forms. A lot of his early painting featured primarily portraits of people, he used a lot squares and rectangles that would try to depict the forms of the people or be used in the background in some abstract manner. His later Cubist painting became much more colorful and had more two-dimensional quality than more jagged geometric shapes. Picasso's Portrait of Dora Maar called "Dora Maar Seated" (fig.4) has a much different look than most of his earlier work. This picture features a much brighter color palette, it does still use some cooler colors like blues and greens but there's not much of that primarily its yellow orange and red. Besides the colors being different the shapes are much different most of the shapes feel loose flowing and more organic than geometric. Her shirt and body is more geometric featuring more of triangular shapes, but the face and hair feels more free flowing and organic, Maar looks more lively and happier than his older work his older work looked more cold and depressing some figures look old or sick or just had a cold vibe to them this portrait is more welcoming. Even though this doesn't really look like a real human being his later work defiantly empathizes on hitting multiple points of view on a flat surface also the color makes it feel more natural and living. Picasso

seemed to focus more on portraits of people where Georges Braque focused more on still-life and/or landscapes.

Georges Braque was born on May 13th, 1882 in Argenteuil, France. Georges Braque primarily wanted to focus on painting mainly impressionist/post-impressionist, artists like Van Gogh, Monet and Paul Cézanne who I disgusted earlier in the paper, but he still wanted to be surrounded by a lot of painter to learn other styles and see what's out there. "Shortly after 1905, he made the transition over to fauvism, and followed many of the color schemes, and design aspects which were more prominent in this form of art" (Source 5). The color scheme that was used in Fauvism painting really made Braque get attached to his work and was able to put in a lot of emotion. He was around the famous Fauvism painter Henri Matisse this is where he learned how to become a Fauvism painter. He learned a lot about the new style being around Matisse and other painters alike. "1908 was when Georges Braque took part in his first solo exhibit; from 1909 up to 1914, he spent a majority of his career working with Picasso. This was when the two men focused on developing a new style of art, and a new depth to what fauvism had already brought to the art world. The two developed new themes, bold lines, and a series of darker color schemes, and created the Cubism style" (Source 5). Picasso and Braque created this new radical style to challenge the traditional way of representation like perspective, which has been the primary form of rule since Renaissance Art era, but they also wanted make it so it could still portray the modern day and age. There were many artist that were inspired by this art movement and got on bored, artists such as Juan Gris, Fernand Léger, Robert Delaunay, and Sonia Delaunay. Without Cubism there are a lot of modern artist and art style that wouldn't have existed if it was created, such as non-representational art, by emphasising on the integration of a depicted scene and the flat surface of the canvas. Experimenting with styles like this would continued to

explore by the, abstractions of shapes, forms, figures and shallow spaces on a two-dimensional surface.

Cubism was a way for artist to progress with the rest of the world in that time, with the advancements of technology and science the artists needed away to keep up in the world. Cubism was one of the most important art movements and was surprisingly widely expected when it was first introduced unlike Perspective which cubism was trying to challenge. Perspective in the greek era but there wasn't any use for it and was discarded. It wasn't till the end of the Medieval art era that Perspective was reintroduced by Filippo Brunelleschi who invented the idea of one-point linear perspective. Filippo Brunelleschi was born in 1377, in Florence, Italy. He was originally a sculptor who was trained as a goldsmith, he ended up transitioning into an Architecture and invented the one-point linear perspective becoming one of the founding fathers of the Renaissance paintings. One-point linear perspective help create the foundation of the Renaissance era of art. But at first not everyone was on bored with this new art style. The European Churches that were in power at the time were against this new One-point linear perspective because it looked different from the paintings and murals they had up at their churches. They felt that it went against their messages because of the way they looked, but the churches were threatened by it because of how accurate the Perspective paintings could copy what the human eye saw. The churches felt their story would look unreal or made up due to the new advancements in painting. But as soon as the churches were able to get a hold of the new style it would help them by making their artwork look more real and believable with realistic looking people and structures that looked three-dimensional by using shades, light and vanishing points. "For the next five centuries, Brunelleschi's system of perspective was used to create the illusion of depth on the picture plane and was used as the basis of the great art of Western culture."(source 7) hundreds of painters used perspective in their work and was a great

invention, most likely the best invention from art. Perspective dominated the art world for a long time starting in 1415 with Filippo Brunelleschi's depiction of the Baptistery in Florence, Italy. Then towards the end of the 19th Century the French painter Paul Cézanne had questioned the underlying structures of his art work some of his work his later work had start to become more two-dimensional and colorful by the end his work started to look more abstract creating influence for the co-founder of Cubism Picasso and Braque, thus the age of perspective ended in 1907 with Pablo Picasso's "Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)" a ground breaking new style of art. Perspective is still widely used today and was a great invention as well as cubism, but cubism served more purposes besides becoming one of the first main forms of abstract it inspired other styles and creations of art like Surrealism, Dadaism, expressionism. Cubism also paved the way for styles of art like cartoons, comics, animated movies and shows. Cartoons use simplified shape and figures, with a brighter and less realistic color palette compared to works of perspective art. They also have less detail in light and shading but are able to produce an object that people can easily identify and make sense of what it is.

Cartoonists also work more two-dimensional which is what cubism was introduced. As technology advanced film/movies became possible artists behind those projects took influence from cubism. The classic foreign film "Man With a Movie Camera" is filmed in a very abstract way. It was made to show the hustle and bustle type of lifestyle that people who lived in the city during the rise of the Industrial era. The film had no set protagonist or antagonist but featured someone with the movie camera going about their day in the busy city. The film featured fast scenes or intense accidents with quick scene changes or spiralling filming trying to capture the city life also with there being no real main actor the film made you feel as if you were living the experience. The artist behind "The Man With a Movie Camera" poster (see fig.5) are Vladimir and Georgii Stenberg who took an abstract approach to the poster and the art work like that. The poster has some geometric shapes scattered around it a simplified pair of cartoon legs of a woman, a realistic and more simplified movie camera the title is bold and scattered, it's

a very intense poster that has a abstract manner to it with only a few colors, without cubism things like this would not exist.

The invention of cubism has been nothing but good for the art world and other creative fields, people were excited about it and embrace it when it was invented. Cubism is a huge part of the Fine Arts being one of the early forms of media for it. It has allowed so much freedom and expression. Perspective and realism can look really good and tell a good story but even tho it may look like it has depth it doesn't actually have nearly as much as cubism does. Cubism express mood, time moving thru space, shows multiple points of view can tell a story through the way the shapes are painted or the colors the artist used in the painting. Cubists are able to express the difference of looking and the difference of seeing in the works of there art. The difference between looking and seeing is different in many ways. To just look at something like a chair you would know what it is and what its used for, like you know people use chairs to sit in but other than that you wouldn't think much of else about it or anything else about it at all for that matter. But to see, seeing takes more than just a quick glance, it requires intellectual engagement and thought, you know its a chair and that people sit in it, but you'd start to notice more like what kinda chair it is, is it big or small, what its made of if its an old chair or a new chair. You be able to see more details to it like chips of paint scratches or other details of sorts you'd really being to admire and appreciate things for what they are. It takes time to stop and process things in order to fully see them. Henry David Thoreau who is not an artist but was an American Historian and essayist along with a poet and philosopher said and I quote "It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see." I believe this to be very accurate to the idea of the Cubist art movement. Because they are try to replicate what they see and how they see it not just what they were looking at. Looking is considered to be passive but seeing is active. Cubism is

active, you can even see it by the way the line and figures are drawn, with the multiple angles and viewpoints they offer.

Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque created a new radical breakthrough for artist and the art sense in 1907 with what they called Cubism. Which had affected the art world in a very positive by introducing a new way of art that was able to keep up with the more times and inventions of things like the camera, films, airplanes and cars, they were able to create a way that broke the traditional perspective and realism art that had been going on for several centuries. Cubism was a great invention for artist of the time and artist today it help paved the way for many other styles of abstraction and really pushed the fine arts far. Cubism today still continues to influence and inspire other artists to study it and adapted to their art style or to go off of it and create their own style, it was a very free and emotional express form of art. One of the biggest style and biggest achievements for artist.

Sources

Source 1

<https://www.biography.com/people/pablo-picasso-9440021>

Source 2

<https://www.biography.com/people/paul-czanne-9542036>

Source 3

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/c/cubism/all-about-cubism>

Source 4

<https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79766>

Source 5

<http://www.georgesbraque.org/>

“Practices of Looking An Introduction to Visual Culture” Second Edition by Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright

Source 6

<https://www.biography.com/people/filippo-brunelleschi-9229632>

Source 7

<http://www.op-art.co.uk/history/perspective/>

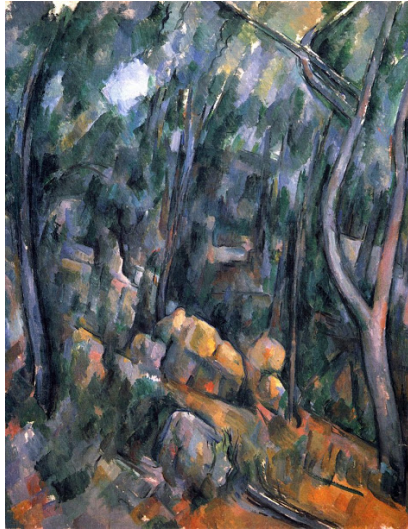
Images

Figure 1 Paul Cézanne's A Modern Olympia



<https://artisticjunkie.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Le-Chateau-Noir-Paul-C%C3%A9zanne-1024x774.jpg>

Figure 2 Paul Cézanne's The Grounds of the Château-Noir



https://lh4.googleusercontent.com/-YIYVAVzD-5s/VKZLCTjzFII/AAAAAAAAAD8I/b2285XKEMRk/w470-h612-no/786px-Paul_C%C3%A9zanne_220.jpg

Figure 3 Pablo Picasso's Les Femmes d'Alger (O Version O)



<https://www.moma.org/media/W1siZiIsIjE1MTI3MSJdLFsicCIslmNvbnZlcnQiLCItcmVzaXplIDlwMDB4MjAwMFx1MDAzZSJdXQ.jpg?sha=f7560007ccdf470f>

Figure 4 Pablo Picasso's Dora Maar Seated



<http://terraingallery.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/DoraMaarSeated-3.jpg>

Figure 5 Vladimir and Georgii Stenberg The Man With a Movie Camera poster



<https://i0.wp.com/thecharnelhouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/vladimir-stenberg-artist-russian-1899-1982-georgii-stenberg-artist-russian-1900-1933-title-chelovek-s-kinoapparatom-the-man-with-the-movie-camera-work-type-graphic-design-dat.jpg?fit=861%2C1200&ssl=1>