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Art History

MODERN ART FROM A NEW YORK PERSPECTIVE

Art has dramatically changed over the time of the 1870s-1900 to the 1960s-80s. Going from Impressionism to Pop Art shows how the real world has influenced artists to create these artworks whether it is history or personal experience. One thing that is constantly being shown no matter what period of time is depicting leisure time and lifestyle. Capturing a moment of real life is seen in every artist's portfolio and the way it is depicted represents their own style. Leisure time can be seen in Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Cubism, Fauvism, Surrealism, and Abstract Expressionism, and Pop Art in their own unique way and the works mentioned will support this. All of these works of art can be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The *Monet Family in Their Garden at Argenteuil* by Édouard Manet (1874) is a family portrait of Claude Monet with his wife and child. The two artists were very close friends and often met with each other over the summer and Manet painted this of Monet with his family while Monet was painting Manet at his easel. The painting is an example of Impressionism. The theme of modernism and leisure time is seen from the way the wife and son are sitting on the grass as Monet is tending to the flowers. The sketchy appearance and unblended strokes can be seen in the background where the trees are and how their faces are not recognizable, they look blurry. This scene clearly depicts family time on a nice summer day.

First Steps, after Millet by Vincent van Gogh (1890) is a translation of Millet's *First Steps* photograph and transferred it onto canvas. Post Impressionism shows feelings through colors and has expressive brush strokes. In this painting, the baby is taking their first steps

while the mother is holding it and the father is opening his arms to catch him. The use of lines to create an illusion of a figure instead of painting the shape of the figure can be seen here. The faces are blurry similar to the impressionist painting mentioned. This painting shows leisure time within the family and it shows they are bonding with each other.

The Seine at Chatou by Maurice de Vlaminck (1906) is a painting of the river near Chatou, where he had moved to live and as a self-taught artist, he would sit and paint around this area for practice. He admired Van Gogh's brushwork and expressive style and this can be seen in this painting especially the water surrounding the boat and the sky. Fauvism used expressive colors and unrealistic use of the colors. This can be seen in this painting from the way that the trees are painted orange and the grass yellow as well as using blue white green in the water as well as the sky instead of separating the two. This use is very unnatural. Nonetheless, it accurately depicts leisure time which is sitting by the harbor and observing nature and taking in this view of the river and the boats that are on it as well as the trees around the area and the bright blue sky. It is similar to Post Impressionism with Van Gogh's brush strokes however the use of color in this case is very different and unrealistic.

Leonora Carrington's Self-Portrait painting (1937) shows the artist with her long wild mane sitting down and reaching to a hyena as if to pet it. There is a tailless rocking horse behind her. She is in an empty room and outside of her curtained window is a white horse that gallops freely into the forest. This painting is an example of Surrealism and how the scene looks very dreamlike. It is a realistic dreamscape and represents the unconscious mind. This looks like an unrealistic version of leisure time to the artist herself. Although she is sitting and playing with the hyena and the background is not true to real life, it still represents leisure time to a surrealist

artist. The expressive brush strokes are not seen in this painting and the objects are not recognized clearly, very different from the previous themes.

The *Glazier* by Willem de Kooning (1940) is part of a series of paintings of a man and he seems to be sitting down next to this table with vase on it and is getting his portrait painted. This is also considered leisure time. Getting a portrait of yourself painted at this time was done during leisure time and this also includes getting a picture taken which photography was starting to come about during this time period. This work of art is considered to be an example of Abstract Expressionism. It is gestural abstraction while retaining the figure and cooperating landscape and figurative subjects into the painting. He used somber earth tones which was inspired by Boscoreale frescoes which he saw in museums. Kooning tried to veer away from mainstream Abstract Expressionism, he was a leader of the movement.

Roy Lichtenstein's *Stepping Out* (1978) is inspired by comic strips from the use of benday dots and melodrama. This painting is also abstract in the way that the man is accurately depicted however the woman has one eye and her face is a rectangle with a wig on top. This scene is showing a couple ready to 'step out'. Although it is not leisure time, it is the act before it. It shows the scene before going out which includes getting ready and leaving the house. Lichtenstein is an artist that often uses comic book themes into his paintings. His work is usually considered Pop Art from the way it relates to popular culture.

I believe that art of the past has an ongoing legacy and that this legacy can be seen in future art works. In the examples above alone one can see how one artist's painting has influenced another artist's work. In Chapter 16 Contemporary art has been influenced by art works in the past for example the use of abstract and pop art can be seen in paintings today but with

their own modern twist. Van Gogh being inspired by Millet and Maurice de Vlaminck being inspired by Van Gogh with his use of brush strokes. Willem de Kooning was inspired by Boscoreale frescoes in his painting and this continues on with many artists. In architecture the use of a dome which was seen in the classical time is still being used today. Through the evolution of art each period went through a learning phase and it was learning from their previous period of how to make their works better and more natural or more abstract and unnatural in the case of modern art. It is about being inspired from others to create your own style and that is why I believe art of the past has an ongoing legacy that will never die.