

FINAL TERM PAPER HISTORY OF ART

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Introduction

Due to being natural, art is considered to be very important for the society. Most art works portray different times and eras in the history of development of a certain genre. In the scopes of this article, three major periods in history and their respective artists will be discussed. The three periods include the Renaissance, Realism and Impressionism. These are covered by art works of Leonardo Da Vinci, Jean Désiré Gustave Courbet and Pierre-Auguste Renoir respectively (Herbert et al. 1991).

Renaissance (Leonardo Da Vinci: The Mona Lisa)



Approximately in 1469, Leonardo started his art work with father's assistance in the famous workshop in Verrocchio, Italy. There were a lot of discussions whether the lady in the art piece is angry or happy as it is a complicated issue to realize whether the lady is laughing or otherwise crying. This workshop made him downward famous by the early twenties.

It is worth noting that the peak of Italian Renaissance took its place in the 16th century as the region has been plagued by the foreign invasions. Leonardo da Vinci is the virtuoso representative of this epoch among the contemporaries of the time. He sought a universal language in the art of painting where he used perspective. Leonardo da Vinci tried to change this world of art, which was under the influence of strange religious paintings and thus brought the essence of reality in the art field. Indeed his painting became the standard for other painters in the 16th century because the whole idea of boldness and freshness brought some form of objectivity to the pieces of art at that time (Roe 2007).

The works of Leonardo da Vinci are widely examined by scholars in the terms of the tools, which were applied by the master for his art performing. For instance, for painting the Mona Lisa, Leonardo da Vinci used oil paints on the poplar wood. The following techniques were applied by Leonardo da Vinci: called 'sfumato' and 'velature' (Italian: 'evaporated' or 'vanished'). Sfumato technique implies the light and dark paint mixing, while using the tiny brush strokes for the smoky blend between the two colors creation. Velature technique, used by the master, means that the paint is mixed by the artist on the canvas, but not on the palette as it is done traditionally. The core success factors of Leonardo's art works were perfecting both techniques in combination of the excellent knowledge of the human anatomy and the laws of nature. That is why the realism in paintings, like the Mona Lisa, is reached due to author's deep knowledge in the area of anatomy. Indeed he was the first artist, who studied the basic physical dimensions of men, children and women. This knowledge helped him create ultimate ideal human figures while painting. The artist never drew very masculine bodies as he referred to them as "bags of nuts". This greatly distanced him from most of his compatriots, like Michelangelo, who used the style of hyperbole in his works of art. For instance, chiaroscuro – the contrast of

light and dark is applied in this type of painting in order to reach the dimension, in such manner the depth or three-dimensionality illusion is achieved. As an evident example of such technique it is possible to consider that Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio developed the tenebrism. In such form of chiaroscuro, it seems that the objects appear from the darkness (Zmuida 2012)

The end of the Renaissance took its place in the 17th century, and it has been followed by Mannerism (1527–1580); Baroque (1600–1750); Neoclassicism (1750–1850); Romanticism (1780–1850) and Realism (1848–1900). the core characteristics of the Realism in art are the following: working class' and peasants' Celebrating and rustic painting.

Realism (Bonjour, Monsieur Courbet)

The Realism in art is characterized by the following: working class' and peasants' Celebrating and rustic painting. The next section of this paper is dedicated to the painting of Gustave Courbet, the Meeting or Bonjour Monsieur (Finocchio 2000)

First of all, it is evident that Gustave Courbet painted the picture of himself on the right side. The self-portrait uncovers the way the artist perceived himself or may be how he wanted to be perceived. A self-portrait allows for a degree of control over the way that others perceive you. Moreover, he tried to announce his identity through the costumes he wears in order to bring the issue of reality and sarcasm at the same time.



One of the men in the green jacket is dressed well while the other one in a brown jacket is scantily dressed. It is evident from the first look that he is a servant of the man beside him and this shows the reality of master and servant in the contemporary society as portrayed by these men. The dog is flanked by the well dressed man yet the other man seems to distance himself from the other three and this then takes a new twist as to whether this could be just a mere chance meeting that was not planned at all. This is even seen from the angle at which the heads are inclined (Thompson 2000).

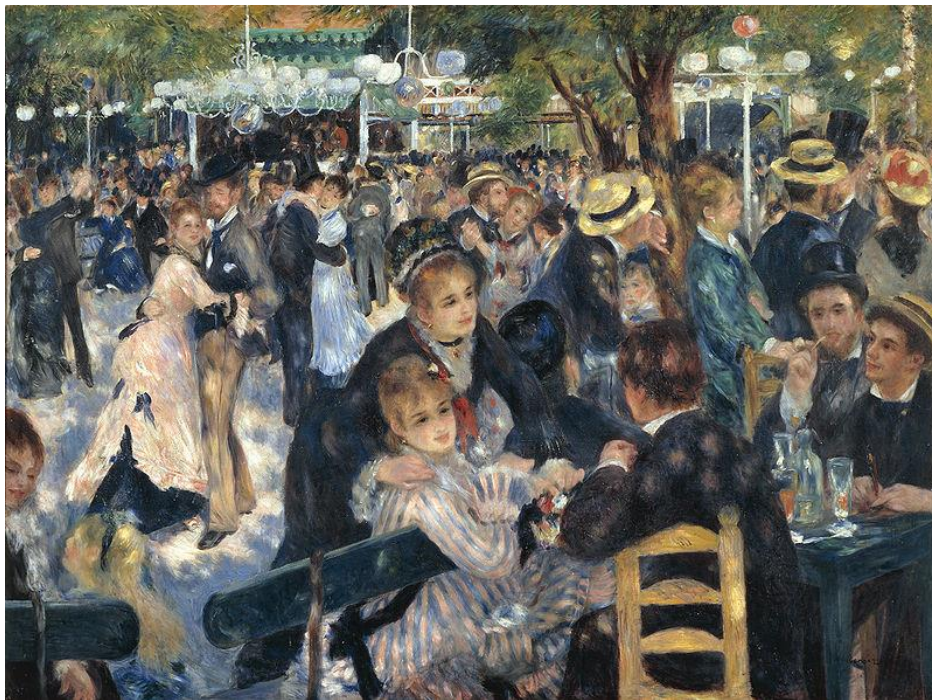
It is a well known fact that Courbet originated from Ornans in the eastern France. This is quite outside of Paris where he had moved. Courbet is a self-sufficient man, and thus he carries on a back with a folding easel which contains everything he needs like canvas, paint, oil, palette, turpentine, and the rags in order to paint from nature. On the contrary, Bruyas is trailed by the servant and he has only a small cane in his hands. It is evident that Bruyas with his servant were transported by the carriage, and thus they are ill-prepared for the countryside; while at the same time Courbet had been making the way while trekking.

To conclude it is important to state a fact that the realists' works of art depict truth and the emphasis of the painter may be put on the ugly or sordid issues (which people face with in everyday life).

Impressionism (Pierre-Auguste Renoir)

The Impressionism (1865–1885) is characterized as the art of capturing the fleeting effects of natural light.

This work of art is called Dance at le Moulin de la Galette or Bal du Moulin de la Galette. It is one of the most popular works of Pierre-Auguste Renoir painted in the 1870s. The painter depicted an open air dancehall café, which was frequently visited by the majority of artists in Paris, France. It was a time of afternoon Sunday dances and the artist enjoyed watching happy couples in the church and this provided a very perfect piece of painting that could bring out the theme of Impressionism.



This painting was first shown at the impressionist exhibition in the year 1877 and developed the originality in his work in a very remarkable manner. Other critics in the field viewed this piece of work as just a mere blurred impression of the scene. Due to the unique kindness in the tones of his paintings these works were referred to as the best ever produced by the artist in his life time as an artist (Gruitrooy 2009).

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