

TRENDS IN AMERICAN MODERN ART

Мосіна Елеонора

Київський національний університет технологій та дизайну

Науковий керівник – Чернець М.О.

The story of American painting and sculpture since 1900 is the story of revolution against tradition. The 1st group of American art, was known as the AshCan School. They were the 1st to paint ordinary people they saw around them on the streets, in cafes...

In the early 1920's the American art showed the strong foreign art influences. By this time, there was a renewed sense of nationalism, and artists such as Thomas Hart Benton, Grant Wood and Edward Hopper celebrated the world with new realism.

During the 1930's a reaction arose against new styles.

In the 1940's and 1950's, a radical movement called abstract expressionism captured world attention and made NY City one of the art capitals of the world. Among the leaders of this movement were Jackson Pollock, William de Kooning, Mark Tobey, Mark Rothko and Robert Motherwell. [4]

Abstract expressionism required artists to freely express thoughts and feeling through form, color or texture. The leading artists used many different methods. Mark Tobey started with natural forms and images, and then painted over them. Jackson Pollock poured or dripped cans of paint onto a canvas spread on the floor until he obtained the effect he wanted. Mark Rothko painted blocks of varying colors directly on his canvases. [3]

American artists took other new directions in the end of 1950's.

Op art – optical art – described those paintings that produce optical illusions.

Pop art – popular art – used familiar objects to focus attention on the concerns of American life.

Minimalism grew out of Op Art, a logical extension of the obliteration of subject matter. Painting and sculpture are reduced to essential forms without

embellishment or complication. Ellsworth Kelly, Robert Grosvenor, Isamu Noguchi, and Stella Frank were among its practitioners.

Conceptual art is rooted in the DaDa movement of the early 1920's, in that it attacks the sacredness and permanence of the artwork itself, claiming that the art is in the idea, and that once the concept has been expressed, the object is unimportant. [1]

Other artists have used a variety of media in their work. For example, Roy Lichtenstein's specialty was large reproductions of comic strips. One of his works had a microphone hidden in it. This microphone records the remarks of anyone viewing the picture and changed this remarks into light patterns that flashed across the picture.

The most influential 20th century American contribution to world art has been a mocking playfulness, a sense that a central purpose of a new work is to join the ongoing debate over the definition of art itself. [2]

REFERENCES

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