

Why georgia o'keefe
painted what she did



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

According to Chave, artists selected the skyscraper as a subject in the 20th century because they were something new and had out-did anything Europe had done so far. It was “ the building of the 20th century”. It was a whole new way of creating art and architecture that was very different from any cathedral in Europe at that time. Art critics like Clement Greenberg commented how New York was “ the most industrialized city with the most advanced people. ” Artists like Duchamp would rave over New York’s skyscrapers and pretty much rub it in Paris’s face because they had no buildings like it (mostly because they didn’t have a need for them).

Duchamp liked to take photos of the skyscrapers, since the camera was invented by this time any way, and it captured the scene even better than painting did. As a matter of a fact, the magnificent structures attracted more photographers than painters at this time. There was however an artist, Robert J. Coady, that believed New York had to be painted because canvas paintings were the medium used for all the centuries before then. He thought the images that were coming from New York photography was spectacular and would have to be preserved historically on canvas, not just simply on film.

Other artists like Abraham Walowitz and Joseph Stella had painted the buildings in New York, but in such a way that made it seem like a “ Cubist vernacular”. Coady didn’t want New York to be painted and portrayed in this way because of all the new architectures in the city. Instead, he wanted it to be painted in conjunction with the “ old, historical buildings”. In other words, he thought that some people were too focused on the new “ geometric

volume figures” to appreciate the historical structures that were there long before them. Georgia O’Keeffe was ready to take on this challenge.

1. O’Keeffe did not paint the new lavish buildings that everyone else was photographing, (including her husband, Alfred Stieglitz), instead, she painted the older, historical fashion shops, galleries, offices, and hotels that were there long before new structures started popping up all over the city. Such buildings were the Radiator Building, the Shelton Hotel, the Berkley Hotel and the Ritz Tower Hotel. These buildings resembled a ziggurat-like silhouette, which symbolized the cosmos and heavens.

When she painted the buildings, she even painted in such a way to make the atmosphere of the scene “ cosmo-like” to give it an even stronger, more powerful effect. These were the buildings that Coady so much wanted to capture on canvas. O’Keeffe and her husband stayed in the Shelton Hotel, as a matter of a fact. She then got the true sense of the buildings magnificence because every time she looked out the window she got the natural mountain-like aspect of the height and monstrosity. She “ contrived her own ravishing vision of New York as a city awash in sunlight, moon glow, or the dazzling aura of an artificial firmament.”

When she painted her scenes, she did not paint it from the ground view, or even from the window view of another tall building, instead she painted them in such a way that allowed for the viewer to see all of the building at once at the same time. This was a new way of presenting the buildings to viewers, especially those who have never experienced them in real life before, they got the true feel of how grand the buildings are. If it wasn’t for

O'Keeffe, we would not be able to appreciate the beauty of those architectures today.

She truly captured the beauty of the scene and demonstrated the significance of the buildings of that time, especially because to art critics back then, the buildings that O'Keeffe was painting were considered “ ancient. ” The buildings were not the new, fantastic, breath-taking buildings of the time, so to critics, the older buildings were nothing special. To people today looking at O'Keeffe's paintings they are, though, breath taking. O'Keeffe had a great appreciation for the natural aspect and sublime of the skyscrapers.

O'Keeffe would omit people from her paintings, making ‘ you’ the viewer. O'Keeffe was passionate about her paintings because the subject matter was important to her. She had a passion for the city and the gorgeous hotels that she cared so deeply for. She painted more than twenty scenes of New York between 1925 and 1930 and displayed them in a number of galleries. Nobody ever had anything bad to say about her New York paintings.

2. O'Keeffe's husband, Alfred Stieglitz, loved to show off his wife's paintings and supported her 100%. He loved her paintings even before they were married actually.

They started out on a professional level, and were sharing art works until they fell in love. He offered to help her financially by paying for her to go to art school in New York, and he helped her get started with becoming a successful artist. Eventually when they did get married, they moved to New York and it was there that O'Keeffe began painting her skyscraper scenes. He would hold galleries and would display her paintings along with his <https://assignbuster.com/why-georgia-okeefe-painted-what-she-did/>

photography, for people to admire and even purchase if they had the money. He did promote her skyscraper paintings, because he thought they were great paintings.

The only reason he denied her permission to show her skyscraper paintings in his 1925 exhibit was because he was more excited about her oversized flower paintings (which she was most famous for). She preferred nature scenes and subjects (some say that is how she was so good at getting the sublime factor into her skyscraper paintings). Stieglitz did however show her skyscraper paintings in later exhibits; that is after her first debut in her own exhibit in 1926. Together they were an artistic pair and if it wasn't for Stieglitz's faith in her paintings and his support she might not have made it as big as she did.