

Essay on impressionism and post impressionism

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Impressionism is the art movement that began in France in the 19th century. Claude Monet's work, *Impression, soleil levant*, or *Impression, Sunrise*, is where the name for the movement was derived. Various styles such as thin, small brush strokes, open composition, accurate depiction of light, ordinary subject matter, movement, and unusual visual angles were used in art during this time period. Impressionists broke the traditional guidelines of painting which drew a hostile reaction from the public at first.

Instead of specific details their art depicted visual effects using various colors, shading, and short strokes leaving out much of the detail and capturing what was being observed at a given moment. (Impressionism, 2013) Impressionist artists were also liberated from painting only indoors by the innovation of storing paint in tubes. This technology allowed artists to paint outside which led them to create pieces that featured landscapes and were more focused on capturing natural light in their work. (MindEdge, 3. 20)

In the 1870's when Impressionism was beginning to grow in popularity, France was undergoing major changes in the political arena. Napoleon III had just been defeated in a war against Prussia. During his rule France saw industrial and economic growth but certain freedoms such as press and assembly had been suppressed. Following his rule, France established the Third Republic. In the beginning there was conflict between royalists and a group referred to as The Commune, a socialist group. After five years of fighting the royalists of the Republic ultimately won by executing hundreds of The Commune in an event now known as The Bloody Week.

During this time thousands of France also fled the country to places like England, Spain, and even the United States. Due to all the hostility by the opposing sides France stayed under martial law for five years. There were also religious impacts during this time period. Most notably was the separation of the Church from the state. This legislation made the Church property of the state and required that religion be removed from schools. Additionally churches were only allowed to remain open if they held public political meetings in the evenings.

Education reform was also in the works that focused on increasing the availability of further education and training in technology. (France in the 19th Century, 2013) Post-Impressionism immediately followed Impressionism beginning in the 1890's. The actual term was first used by Roger Fry a British artist and art critic in 1910. Post-Impressionism typically refers to the time period since French painter, Edouard Manet. The style of Post-Impressionism continued the use of vivid colors, thick paint application, real-life subject matter, and distinct brush strokes that were all common during Impressionism.

Additionally artists also highlighted geometric forms, and used strange or uninformed colors. A foundation for quite a few 20th-century contemporary trends evolved because of the work of Post-Impressionist artists. (Post-Impressionism, 2013) World War II, a paramount world event was happening during the Post-Impression period. Many in France welcomed this war as a way to defeat Germany after the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. Attitudes soon changed regarding the war. Soldiers grew tired and hesitant to attack.

Due to the war the economy in France was devastated during this time by German invasion in major industrial areas.

America was a relief for France during the war providing food, money, and raw materials in 1917. Following the war France was in a poor state economically and the government struggled as well. France's economy continued to struggle even after the war as they were behind in industry. Germany and Great Britain both beat France industrially regardless of the great industry and infrastructure that was in France. (France in the 20th Century, 2013) There are many similarities and a few differences between art during the Impressionism and Post-Impressionism Eras.

Both art forms were neither realistic nor abstract, dealt with realistic subject matter a lot of which were landscapes and the artist's uses of colors to show light sources. Additionally both periods used some of the same techniques in relation to distinct brush strokes, thick application of paint, and use of vivid and sometimes unrealistic paint colors. Even though Post-Impressionist artists carried on several of the Impressionist innovations there were also new things introduced. Post-Impressionist artist used unnatural forms and colors to portray things in the natural world while Impressionists works were more realistic.

Also, Impressionist artists had less of a concern for expression and structure than Post-Impressionist artists. (MindEdge, 3. 20) Post-Impressionism continued much of the work of Impressionism. The use of real subject matter, the ability to do art outdoors, and the artists approach to color selections and applications are all examples of how Impressionism had

stylistic impacts on Post-Impressionism. These similarities can be better understood by analyzing works from each era. Claude Monet was an Impressionist artist. His work, Houses of Parliament, is an oil painting that he produced in approximately 1901.

In this work Monet portrays his view of the houses of Parliament across the Thames River in London from his room in the Savoy Hotel. As in most works of this time period Monet used abstract shapes, muted colors, and a distinct light source that shows the exact time of day, late afternoon, in which he completed this work. (The Houses of Parliament, 2013) In contrast to this work is Vincent van Gogh's Post-Impressionist work, Irises. Van Gogh completed this and many of his works from within the confines of Stain Paul-de-Mausole, an asylum in France. Van Gogh spent many of his days painting the gardens that surrounded the clinic.

As seen in Irises, van Gogh uses bright vibrant colors, lighting sources that resemble a bright, sunny day, and much more realistic techniques than in Monet's Houses of Parliament. (Vincent van Gogh, 2013) Houses of Parliament relates to Irises because they represent the differences between Impressionism and Post-Impressionism art styles and techniques. You can see in Irises a lot of the techniques that started during the Impressionist period but that were refined during Post-Impressionism, specifically in the detail of the brush strokes, more realistic feel, and brighter colors used in the piece.

Post Impressionism influenced the art world by bringing painting into a more realistic phase and by introducing new techniques that are still used in

painting today. The use of various colors to portray light sources, while beginning during Impressionism, was highly elevated during Post-Impressionism. Additionally the radical approach and independent styles used by post-impressionist artist and their resolve of pursuing exclusive artistic expression intensely influenced future groups of artists. (The Met Post-Impressionism, 2013).