

# Abstract expressionism - art and surreal

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Expressionism (ART and Surreal) The artists' expression of art is defined in terms of time frame, personal perspectives and interpretation of any subject or medium deemed available at the time of creation and design.

The term abstract expressionism is defined by Payton as “ a school of painting that flourished after World War II until the early 1960s, characterized by the view that art is nonrepresentational and chiefly improvisational” (par. 1). On the other hand, surrealism in art derives its meaning as a manifestation of “ a style of art and literature developed principally in the 20th century, stressing the subconscious or non-rational significance of imagery arrived at by automatism or the exploitation of chance effects, unexpected juxtapositions, etc.” (Biography Project, par. 1).

The works of Hans Hoffman and Jackson Pollack are examples of works exemplifying abstract expressionism and the application of surrealist ideas in terms of the free flow of improvised expressions of designs, colors and style depicted in their art works *Spring* and *One: Number 31*, respectively. Both artists employed the technique of action painting, defined as “ a highly-charged, impulsive abstract painting technique during which paint is energetically splashed, spilt or dribbled onto a canvas, usually placed face-up on the floor” (Action painting, par. 1).

Pollack's *One: Number 31* created in 1950 is basically shown in colors black, white and grey on a brown backdrop with obvious but artistic rendition of the drip technique. Hoffman's *Spring* is more colorful with more lively hues of red, yellow, green and intermittent blue in conjunction with the white, black and gray drips and splashes. A connection between the two art works could be deduced from the similarities in style and drips forming long elongated

lines that curve into an intricate web of patterns interwoven with other colors. Pollack created more splashes as evidenced by tiny blots of black paint just by the edge of the frame. Hoffman, on the other hand, has larger blots and splashes of an array of colors with red predominantly domineering and enlivening the painting.

The spontaneity of expressions of both artists was eminent and vivid in their art works. The expression using improvisation and non representational styles were used by both artists as they created the surreal forms using drips and splashes. One definitely could not envision any solid form or meaning from the art works but the style and the techniques are commendable and awe-inspiring. The similarities in techniques could be interpreted as if the paintings are connected in concurrent events with Pollack's painting being considered a sequel to Spring, due to the sublime and limited colors compared to Hoffman's work.

Despite being separated in time of creation: Hoffman's 1944 to 1945 painting vis-à-vis Pollack's 1950 art work, the way that the artists expressed innovative techniques using drip, slashes, action painting with similar lines and patterns make their art connected as part of abstract expressionism and surrealism, both nonrepresentational, vividly imaginative, no boundaries, free flow of expressions, and their meaning left to chance and to the viewers' diverse perspectives.

#### Works Cited

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