

Jeffrey smart



**ASSIGN
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JEFFREY SMART ESSAY An Iconic and well-known Australian artist, born in Adelaide in 1921 and moved permanently to Italy in 1963, often found using his work to depict industrial urban landscapes, he is Jeffrey Smart. Smart's work has been part of Australian culture for more than half a century, he is Australia's master of the urban vision; seeing beauty in the landscapes of modernism, his works feature industrial wastelands and concrete streetscapes he pays close attention to clean lines, composition and geometry.

This essay will critically analyse Jeffrey Smart's painting 'Autobahn in the Black Forest 1' which was created in 1979/80 using oil on canvas, it measures 100 x 65cm in size. Smart's work is influenced by urban landscapes, an example of one of his works is 'Autobahn in the Black Forest 1' this piece is an example of many influenced by urban landscapes. On the right hand side of the painting it shows a series of road barriers on a road going off into the distance, they are painted red and white diagonally.

The first barrier seen has a vertical pole attached with a rust texture, added is a shadow on the right side of the pole to make the painting more realistic. The left hand side shows a road, painted onto the road are yellow lines; these lines get more vibrant into the distance. The sky is dark though gets brighter into the distance of the painting. Forest trees are surrounding the road. The main shapes used are rectangles.

The lower right of the painting has a signature 'Jeffrey Smart'. Many of Smart's paintings are focused on the element of shape. In this painting he uses simple rectangles; he has painted the road lines dark yellow which gets more vibrant into the distance of the painting. There is an obvious repetition

shown in the painting, the road barriers, these barriers are also coloured brightly. Smart admits that it's a painstaking process for him " getting the right shapes in the right place. The gloomy sky seen in the painting is used in many of Smart's paintings, and when asked why his skies are always so gloomy and smog-laden, Smart replied with, " I need a dark sky for the composition, because the pale blue at the top of the frame loses nothing. " I work on the basis that ... our eyes go from left to right, left to right, left to right, always. So I always have something for the eye to start with on the left there, brings it across, and then something to bring it back again". These dark, gloomy skies re found in most of his paintings, including " Autobahn in the black forest 1". " Although Smart agrees composition is central to his paintings, he says the play of light and shadow is equally important, along with stillness and silence" The elements Smart has used and evident in this piece are colour, repetition, space and shape. Smart chooses his art to portray scenes of modern architecture. Since childhood, where his first ambition was to be an architect, he has harboured a fascination for the subject.

Which he finds exciting and beautiful, and he has based his style around the strong, simple, geometric shapes and lines that can be seen in them. He strives in his artwork to achieve the perfect composition of shape, balance, colour and light and what he calls the " fundamental aesthetic principal" of absolute stillness in his paintings. Smart's environment has been his most important influence; he spent his early years discovering the back lanes of the city's inner suburbs. Street signs, apartment blocks and construction sites then had become his subject matter.

It was in Italy that the colours, shapes and designs of a country rebuilding itself after World War Two inspired Smart. And in 1965, he moved to Italy and bought the house where he has still resided for about 40 years. Smart decided early on in his career what he wanted to work with " My attraction to urban life, factories, trucks and vacant lots came in my early 20s when I decided that I had painted my last billabong scene forever. " Travelling to Europe and Italy in particular allowed Smart to experience and study works at first hand.

One reason for Smart to buy a property and establish a studio near Arezzo was that the Church of San Francesco in that city contained the great fresco ' cycle the legend of the true cross' by the Quattrocento artist, a work which has continued to inspire Smart throughout his life. Jeffrey Smart is without doubt one of the most outstanding Australian painters of the modern age. " I like living in the 20th century — to me the world has never been more beautiful. I am trying to paint the real world I live in, as beautifully as I can, with my own eye".