

Visiting the art institute in chicago: analysis of the paintings

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In order to meet the requirements to write this essay I decided to visit the Art Institute in Chicago on Sunday April 17th 2016 to view the many different art pieces. The artwork that I would like to share that I found interesting are the paintings *At the Moulin Rouge* and *The Traveler*. The third piece of artwork I would like to share is the sculpture *Eternal Springtime*. I am going to share information about the artists who created these three artworks, background information on the art works themselves as well as the different elements of style each artwork has. All three of these artworks connect to different artworks we have learned in the class. I am also going to share why I chose to share these artworks and how I feel about the artworks.

The painting *At the Moulin Rouge* was created by the artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec between the years 1892 and 1895. Lautrec was born in 1864 into an aristocrat family who had suffered from inbreeding from past generations. Lautrec was crippled in both legs due to bad genes that caused breaks in both legs to not heal properly. Therefore leaving him crippled and to grow a love for art with his free-time. With his love for art he became an important post-impressionist painter, an art nouveau illustrator and a lithographer where he recorded in his many artworks the 19th century bohemian lifestyle of Paris. This painting in particular was created due to Lautrec's love for the cabaret Moulin Rouge. The historical movement this painting is part of is the post-impressionism period which is considered to have started in 1886. This painting reveals the post-impressionist style of the time period with the expressive color and compositional structure. The figures in the painting are famous people including the artist himself, Lautrec as well as different dancers and singers. The painting reveals that people of

this time in the late 1800's enjoyed their leisure time at bars or cabarets like Moulin Rouge.

What I noticed about the painting style used in this painting is the long, thin brush strokes that left the canvas which it was painted on showing through. The painting style used was linear which gave good emphasis to the contour of the painting. I also noticed the elements of style of the use of vibrant colors where many other post-impressionist artists used. These elements of art in this painting reflect on the artistic movement of post-impressionism that was occurring at this time period in the late 1800's. An artwork that this painting is similar to that we learned about in our textbook is the painting *The Starry Night* by Vincent Van Gogh. Both paintings are vibrant in colors which show the post-impressionist characteristics. Although they differ in thickness of brush strokes, the paintings are similar in expressing the post-impressionist elements of style. We learn from comparing these two famous paintings that the artistic style that was used was popular at the time. It shows the expressiveness with the vibrant colors and the artistic elements of art nouveau. We learn that art nouveau is known as a new art style that was formed in the post-impressionist time period when both of these paintings were created.

The reasons why I was drawn to this painting when I visited the Art Institute was the vibrant colors as well as the bright blue face of the woman in the right hand side of the painting. I read about the background information of the painting which made me decide to use this painting to write about. At one point the blue faced woman in the painting was cut off because the

artist or dealer thought she was the reason why the painting was not selling well. Although in 1914 the woman was added back onto the painting. I enjoyed learning about this story behind the painting since I could not tell that the lady had been removed and added back later to the painting. I would recommend seeing this painting to any person who enjoys art in this form especially any person who appreciates artwork from other famous artists like Vincent Van Gogh or Paul Gauguin.

Another piece of magnificent and interesting artwork I would like to share is the sculpture *Eternal Spring* created by Auguste Rodin around 1884. Rodin was the leading sculptor in the late nineteenth century who was born in 1840 and died in 1917. Rodin's critics accused his artwork of forgery since his sculptures were so lifelike. Rodin's artwork was considered intense with emotion that differed from Classical and Renaissance sculptures. This piece of artwork was part of the historical movement of Realism. From the textbook we learn that "Rodin augmented Realism with an unparalleled sense of organic movement and nervous energy" (378). What this sculpture reveals about the time period it was created in is the intense emotion that artists liked to express in their artwork. This sculpture is of a man and woman expressing their affection they have for each other with a dramatic kiss. I believe that people in this time period were not afraid to show passion, love or romance since it is depicted here in this sculpture. Therefore this sculpture expresses the characteristic of Realism since it is lifelike as well as intense emotion of love and passion.

What I noticed in particular about this sculpture is that it captures an intense emotion of love that I have not seen before with other sculptures. As stated before, the artist Rodin enjoyed expressing intense emotion in his sculptures as well as having a realistic style of art. The way the elements of style this sculpture obtains relates to the historical movement of Realism. We learn about Auguste Rodin in our textbook that explains him as an amazing sculptor who masters the skill of capturing the physical vitality of the human figure. Another sculpture that is similar to Eternal Spring is The Intoxication of Wine created by Claude Michel from the Rococo Style in the 1700's. I would say the way these sculptures are similar is because they both capture an interaction between two people. Although they differ in the fact that the Eternal Spring is moment of passion and love while The Intoxication of Wine is a moment of celebration. We learn from the comparison of these two artworks is how incredible both artists were in mastering the skill of realistic artwork. Both sculptures are interesting in regards to them being very lifelike.

The reason why I chose to write about this piece of artwork was the fact that it was different than other sculptures that I have seen before. This sculpture is different than others since it captures a moment of love and passion with a man and woman kissing. I enjoy this artwork since it exemplifies the artistic style of realism and intense emotion. I would recommend any person who enjoys sculptures to see this piece of artwork as well as anyone who enjoys the specific artwork style of Realism.

The amazing painting *The Traveler* created by Jacques-Emile Blanche in about 1890 is another painting I found interesting enough to share. The artist Jacques-Emile Blanche is a famous painter of his time who belonged to the most fashionable social and cultural circles of Paris. He was born in Paris in 1861 and lived a long life of 81 years dying in 1942. Blanche was said to have lacked originality due to his loose brushwork and subdued coloring of his portraits that resembled many artworks of other famous artists. This painting in particular is of a woman who he had painted thirteen times in his life, her name is Desiree Manfred. This painting was created in this historical movement of the post-impressionist era. This artwork reveals the painting style that was used in the time period of using bright colors while capturing the image of intense visual experience.

What I noticed about this piece of artwork was the colors that were chosen to paint it. The colors used were bright in a sort of way that made the dress the woman was wearing shine. The focus is brought to the colors of the painting which is an important element of style used in the post-impressionist era. These elements of art reflect on the artistic movement of the post-impressionist era since it expresses the bright colors that were used in that time period. A piece of artwork that I felt was similar to *The Traveler* is the painting *The Bath* by Mary Cassatt. Although the paintings are from different style eras, they both use bright colors as well as a different angle or perspective. In the painting *The Traveler*, it seems as the angle is looking up at the woman, where as the angle in *The Bath* is looking down on the woman and child. These perspectives are similar in the way that they are unusual.

We learn that in comparison of these two paintings that the style used in the impression era is similar to the style used in the post-impression era.

Although in the post impression era the artists gave greater emphasis on expressive color which is why the colors are brighter in The Traveler.

The reason why I was drawn to the painting The Traveler was due to the colors of the woman's dress. The colors made her dress gleam in the light, therefore causing her dress to seem shiny. What I enjoyed learning about this painting was that this woman in the painting was the artist's favorite model and that she had been painted thirteen times before. I would recommend any person to see this painting who enjoys artwork from either the impressionist or post-impressionist era.

In conclusion I shared three artworks that I enjoyed looking at when visiting the Art Institute in Chicago. At the Moulin Rouge and The Traveler were two paintings from the post-impressionist era that differed greatly but I found both intriguing. The sculpture Eternal Spring from the historical movement of Realism was another fascinating art work that I shared. After reading and learning about all three amazing artworks it made me appreciate and enjoy fine art even more.