

Modern American Abstract Expressionists: A Survey

Introduction

Modern American Abstract Expressionists: A Survey is the definitive guide to the history, techniques, and impact of Abstract Expressionism, one of the most important and influential art movements of the 20th century. This comprehensive volume explores the origins of Abstract Expressionism in New York City in the 1940s, its key artists and their groundbreaking techniques, and its lasting legacy on American culture and the global art world.

Abstract Expressionism emerged as a reaction against the prevailing styles of realism and figuration, and its practitioners sought to express their inner emotions and experiences through the use of abstract forms and

colors. The movement was characterized by a wide range of techniques, including action painting, color field painting, lyrical abstraction, hard-edge painting, and collage.

The artists of Abstract Expressionism were a diverse group, but they shared a common goal of breaking away from traditional artistic conventions and creating a new, more expressive form of art. Among the most influential Abstract Expressionists were Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, and Clyfford Still.

Abstract Expressionism had a profound impact on American culture and the global art world. It helped to establish New York City as a major center of the art world, and its influence can be seen in the work of subsequent generations of artists, including Pop Art, Minimalism, and Conceptual Art.

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in Abstract Expressionism, and a new generation of

artists has emerged who are drawing inspiration from its legacy. Modern American Abstract Expressionists: A Survey provides a comprehensive overview of this important movement, and its insights will be invaluable to anyone interested in the history of art, American culture, or the creative process.

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This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the history of art, American culture, or the creative process. It is also a valuable resource for artists, students, and collectors.

Chapter 1: Abstract Expressionism in New York City

The New York School and its Origins

The New York School was a group of artists who lived and worked in New York City in the mid-20th century. They are considered to be the pioneers of Abstract Expressionism, a movement that revolutionized the art world and established New York City as a major center of the art world.

The New York School emerged in the aftermath of World War II, when a new generation of artists began to reject the prevailing styles of realism and figuration. They were influenced by European modernism, particularly the work of the Surrealists and the Bauhaus. However, they also developed their own unique style, characterized by its emphasis on abstraction, emotion, and spontaneity.

The New York School artists were a diverse group, but they shared a common goal of breaking away from traditional artistic conventions and creating a new, more expressive form of art. Among the most influential New York School artists were Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, and Clyfford Still.

The New York School artists often worked in studios in Greenwich Village and SoHo, and they socialized at bars and restaurants in the area. They were also active in the art community, organizing exhibitions and participating in discussions about art.

The New York School had a profound impact on the development of Abstract Expressionism, and its influence can still be seen in the work of contemporary artists. The New York School artists were pioneers who helped to change the course of art history.

Chapter 1: Abstract Expressionism in New York City

The Influence of European Art

Abstract Expressionism emerged in New York City in the 1940s, but its roots can be traced back to the early 20th century European avant-garde movements. European artists such as Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, and Wassily Kandinsky were experimenting with new forms of abstraction, and their work had a profound influence on the development of Abstract Expressionism.

One of the most important influences on Abstract Expressionism was the work of the Surrealists. The Surrealists sought to explore the subconscious mind and create art that was free from conscious control. Their work often featured dreamlike imagery and unexpected juxtapositions of objects. Abstract

Expressionists were drawn to the Surrealists' emphasis on spontaneity and the exploration of the inner self.

Another important influence on Abstract Expressionism was the work of the Constructivists. The Constructivists believed that art should be functional and that it should reflect the modern industrial age. Their work often featured geometric forms and primary colors. Abstract Expressionists were drawn to the Constructivists' emphasis on structure and order.

The influence of European art on Abstract Expressionism is evident in the work of many of the movement's leading artists. Jackson Pollock, for example, was influenced by the Surrealists' emphasis on spontaneity and the exploration of the inner self. Willem de Kooning was influenced by the Constructivists' emphasis on structure and order. Mark Rothko was influenced by the Surrealists' dreamlike imagery and unexpected juxtapositions of objects.

The influence of European art on Abstract Expressionism helped to shape the movement's unique style and vision. Abstract Expressionists were able to take the innovations of the European avant-garde and adapt them to their own unique American context. As a result, Abstract Expressionism emerged as a new and distinct art movement that had a profound impact on the development of modern art.

Chapter 1: Abstract Expressionism in New York City

The Role of Artists' Studios

The artists' studios of New York City played a vital role in the development of Abstract Expressionism. These studios were not simply places where artists worked; they were also places where artists lived, socialized, and exchanged ideas. The studios were often located in industrial areas, such as SoHo and Chelsea, and they were often large and loft-like, with high ceilings and plenty of natural light. This open and airy environment was conducive to the creation of large-scale abstract paintings.

The artists' studios were also important social spaces. Artists would often gather in each other's studios to talk about art, politics, and life. These conversations helped to shape the ideas and aesthetics of the Abstract Expressionist movement. The studios were also places

where artists could experiment with new techniques and materials.

Some of the most famous Abstract Expressionist artists had studios in New York City, including Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, and Clyfford Still. These artists often worked in isolation in their studios, but they also came together on occasion to discuss their work and to socialize. The studios were a melting pot of ideas and influences, and they played a major role in the development of Abstract Expressionism.

In addition to providing a physical space for artists to work, the studios also provided a sense of community and support. The artists knew that they could always go to their studios to find a place to work, to talk about art, or to simply relax. The studios were a home away from home for many of the Abstract Expressionist artists, and they played a vital role in their creative lives.

This extract presents the opening three sections of the first chapter.

Discover the complete 10 chapters and 50 sections by purchasing the book, now available in various formats.

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