Realism is defined by depicting realistic or real attributes of the time, place and event displayed in the painting. It is a direct reflection of reality of the given time. It was a popular movement in the 19th century. It is defined by the vast detail in the photo. Everything has a purpose and meaning. The color palette, lines, composition and focal point all together bring the entire meaning of the painting.

Thomas Eakins was an American Realist painter, best known for his work around the 1870s. I am choosing to critique one of his most famous realist paintings, The Swimming Hole. This was oil on canvas painting in 1884-1885. It depicts the joys of himself and his students and friends, young boys taking a dip in the swimming hole. In this time, nudity was not frowned upon, especially among males. This painting is a great example of Realism. The focal point of the photo is the man on the top standing completely nude. The detail to the body, on each character displayed in the painting, is very defined, which shows an appreciation of the human body and gives a more accurate and real impression. It’s interesting to note, however, that some of the men in this painting almost look the exact same, as noted in Tom Lubbock’s article, *Eakins, Thomas The Swimming Hole (1885) The Independent's Great Art series*. The water looks chilly, yet refreshing with the details in the lines of the water. There is also a dog swimming in the water. The detail of the foliage behind the scene suggests that this was a secluded, more private swimming hole where these boys could get away and relax. There are many moments of movement which also depicts a realism perspective, such as the water splashes of the man jumping in the water or the ripples on the top of the swimming hole.

Expressionism is defined through dramatic colors and lines, where artists can express certain feelings or emotions. It in a literal sense, Expressionism was an expression that comes forth within the artist (The Modern Art Insight), often using intensified brush strokes, shapes and bold colors. Expressionism was most prevalent in Germany in the early 20th century.  In my opinion they are very loud pieces of art, regardless of the color palette used in the painting, and they depict a clear feeling or emotion.

Edvard Munch was a Norwegian painter that had a great influence on the Expressionism movement. I am choosing to use his most famous piece of work, The Scream, created in 1983, which was an oil, tempura and pastel painting, on a cardboard canvas. Although it may seem depressing, Munch focused on the theme of death throughout most of his paintings. He intensified the feelings and emotions of anxiety, agony and fear. The Scream is a depiction of an individual battling society., “The Scream evokes the jolting emotion of the encounter and exhibits a general anxiety toward the tangible world” (The Modern Art Insight).  Looking at this picture, you can immediately sense fear and darkness. The colors used in the painting are carefully chosen, almost as if he is depicting hell on the horizon. The focal point is the individual in the middle of the photo, seeming to contemplate whether to jump off the bridge. The large brush strokes and swirls portray a sense of confusion almost, there is nothing about this painting that screams (no pun intended) clarity. It’s very dark and morbid and that is exactly what Munch was going for.

Abstraction is all about thinking outside of the box. Abstraction is “about painting the essence of a subject or your interpretation of the subject rather than the visible realistic details, while still retaining an echo of whatever it is that prompted the initial idea, unlike a pure abstract” (Abstract Art: An Introduction). Bright colors, shapes, objects and even techniques can be involved in creating a piece of work influenced by the Abstraction movement.

Hans Hofman played a big role in the Abstraction art movement in the early 20th century, specifically having a huge impact on Abstract Expressionism (Abstract Art Framed). His paintings display the use of vibrant and dramatic colors and shapes, almost as if each painting is a “celebration of life”. Hofman was born in Germany, explaining his influence of Expressionism into his Abstraction style of work.

One of Hofman’s pieces that displays the Abstraction movement well, one that actually had a title (a lot of his pieces were *Untitled*) was a piece called Cathedral. This piece is oil on canvas, created in 1959. This piece, in my opinion is a bunch of random, different colored blocks stacked atop one another. Through his loud and vibrant colors, undefined brushstrokes, and choice of large shapes and objects, this piece clearly falls under the classic definition of Abstraction. However, I personally see no meaning in it, Hofman saw it as a masterpiece and that he was bringing meaning to things that necessarily wouldn’t have meaning in the first place.

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