

## **Art: A Descriptive Analysis of Modern Architecture and Modern Painting**

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**Abstract:** This essay is dedicated to providing a descriptive analysis of modern architecture and painting from unified and contrasting perspectives. It discusses the common features, divergent paths, and cultural implications of both types of arts. The article aims to highlight the main revolutionary concepts and the visionary aesthetics that make an avant-garde movement, thus indicating a historical shift from the traditional paradigm to that of modern art. The final findings of this study will indicate factor, function and artistic expression working together, highlighting how the present world of art is so enriching and evolving. The combination of ascertained conclusions recommends for the implementation of interdisciplinary approaches aimed at boosting the creativity, unconventionality and the cultural discourse of artists in the emerging years.

**Keywords:** Modern Architecture, Modern Painting, Modern Art

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Amidst the constant evolution of art, the idea of what modern art is and the way in which it reshapes our understanding of creativity and beauty is always on the move. This article explores the complex transformation of two specific but related spheres of modern art. This descriptive analysis follows a two-point juxtaposition of modern architecture and paintings to unveil the shared principles, innovations, and cultural impacts that give shape to the modernist art movement.

The 19th became a crucial time for artistic transition, proving to be the period that liberated and encouraged the rise of avant-garde movements in architecture and painting. The analysis traces the historical background of the transformation from an ancient art form to a modern one, highlighting the revolutionary approach and visionary aspects of modern art while studying the impact that these art forms have had on the development of modern art.

## 2. MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Modern architecture is a revolutionary experience that interrupted and transformed the past cultural heritage through "repeated actions of rupture" (Di Trinca, 2020). It can be defined as the functional redefinition of all visible space - from objects to internal spaces' distribution, from neighborhoods to the city conceived as an aggregate of neighborhoods grouped according to function hierarchy. This involves integrated planning and a system of communicable forms aimed at inventing a new building independent from past limitations (Di Trinca, 2020). Modern architects are known to propose a style linked to efficiency, rationality, and neutral, diffusible, daily values, rethinking the relationship between style and motivations rooted in 19th-century egalitarian aspirations (Di Trinca, 2020), all while rejecting the idea of style to promote one particular aesthetic, instead formulating fundamental principles like "form follows function" (Wrana, 2009). Modern architecture emerged from confronting academic, eclectic, and rationalist experiences in the industrial society, aiming to solve problems generated by that culture. Its end is conventionally dated to 1989 with ideologies' fall and renewed planning freedom (Di Trinca, 2020). Modern architecture, with its ethos rooted in functionality and efficiency, emerged from a confrontation with academic, eclectic, and rationalist traditions in industrial society. It redefined visible space and urban planning, emphasizing form following function. This movement, marking a departure from past styles, embodies egalitarian ideals while promoting innovative design principles (Fig 1).



**Figure 1:** Modern architecture

Modern architecture acted as a revolutionary experience of breaking

away and reshaping the old cultural heritage through "repeated acts of rupture" (Di Trinca, 2020). It can be defined as the new and redesigned function of all areas, internal and external space, and the urban areas as a whole. This can be done by grouping the areas as per the hierarchy of the urban area's function. Through inclusive planning with communicable forms, the buildings are created in a harmonious and adjacent state to the past limitations (Di Trinca, 2020). Contemporary designers often stand for a style focused on efficiency, rationality, and daily humanistic values, using 19th-century egalitarian objectives as a base, the principles of which are the ideas of style as an aesthetic, but stylistic principles like the 'form follows function', which imply the fundamental concept of a perceived style in the architecture (Wrana, 2009). In modern times, to combat the academic, eclectic, and purist practices that were common in industrial societies, as well as to meet the shortcomings of these cultures, was a task given to architecture that assured to counter them and played a major role in the said practices. However, symbolically, its ending is conventionally dated back to 1989 as it was at this point that the collapse ideologies made planning a freely renewable subject (Di Trinca, 2020). The revolution carried in modern architecture, whose backbone is that of reality against an academic and diverse taste adopted in industrial society, sprung up. It decided the fate of urban planning and traditional urban development. This movement is synonymous with discarding the existing styles to echo democratic ideas, while simultaneously providing for new design principles.

## 2.1 Key Architectural Movements That Shaped Modern Architecture

There have been several key architectural movements that have contributed to the development of modern architecture as we see today. Some of them include:

### 2.1.1 Functionalism

Functionalism focuses on simple geometric forms and lacks emphasis on unnecessary embellishments, making the shapes appear basic and plain (Huang & Tong, 2022). It emphasized the design of buildings according to the purpose of the space to yield the principles of "form follows function". This technique focused on utility and effectiveness, leaving an architectural essence that perfected the craft over the years to date.

### 2.1.2 Bauhaus

Bauhaus was an art school in Germany, founded in 1919, which brought

in the movement that proved itself to be highly influential as it brought together fine arts and crafts. The style advocated was simple and geometric, with functionality as a key concept (Huang & Tong, 2022). The school blended handcrafts and fine arts at the same time, making furniture and other simple designs for practical uses. Its mixed methodology allowed it to create connections and encouraged aspiration, which remains at the heart of contemporary design ideology (Fig 2).



**Figure 2:** Bauhaus

### 2.1.3 Minimalism

Minimalism was later introduced in response to Bauhaus, where one reduced architecture to the most basic of features and ignored any excessive decorations. Adopting simplicity and a mold of pure form, simple design was its core focus that sought to create through essential spaces that lacked ornate decorations, revealing designers' wish for straightforwardness and veracity instead (Huang & Tong, 2022).

### 2.1.4 Modernism

Modernism in design first appeared in architecture and was more than structural utilitarianism (Huang & Tong, 2022). It was a service to the people and not only the elite. The movement used technology and functionalism to its fullest extent promoting housing that would be flexible, convenient, and based on the needs of a society. Modernists' architecture reorganized the space of cities (cityscapes), which favored effectiveness and progress (Fig 3).



**Figure 3:** Modernism

#### 2.1.5 Deconstructionism

Deconstructionism, which was the consequence of Derrida's philosophy, downplayed the traditional features of architecture in favor of the disorganized and non-rectangular streaks (Flood, 2014). This was made possible by unsettling the notions of stability and smoothness (which were the hallmarks of the past). Instead, it opened up new possibilities of expression in the field of architecture and invited the viewers to see the space anew, challenging their preconceived notions about space and structure (Šuvaković, 2012).

#### 2.1.6 Brutalism

Brutalism's style had rough-hewn concrete construction; where functionality took precedence over decorative embellishments (Santos, 2015). Its powerful, monumental shapes often expressed an emotion of force and authority or "Macht und Dignität." On the other hand, its devotion to the use of natural materials defied superfluous decorations and reflected a more emotional side of the ideal architecture (Fig 4).



**Figure 4:** Brutalism



### 3. MODERN PAINTING

Modern painting tends to be self-referential, and unreferenced, and it embodies metalanguage nature (Santos, 2015). It offers a diverse, coexisting, and multifaceted outlook all at the same time, presenting itself as the rebirth of the old with new interpretations. It demonstrates the synchronicity of space and time, dispersing gazes, feelings, and sensations in a single point (Santos, 2015). Modern artwork is independent and closely connected to its context, providing a great function of poetry. It covers the creation of the narrative technique and writing, the discovery, and contemplation of some absolute property of the literature (Santos, 2015) (Fig 5).



**Figure 5:** Modern painting

The main characteristic of modern painting is briefness; it's to-the-point, precise in verbal expression, and open-ended in the last form. Modern painters use mediums like aquarelle, pastel, and colored prints (the main feature of which is the deliberate contrast of colors). The artworks call the process of work into question, probe into this process, and compose a space of reflection or a sign of modernity (Santos, 2015). Modern painting is just like an art object, looking for visual effect by containing pleasure with aesthetic content of type, color, proportion, and harmony as we find in geometric abstract painting (Nemes, 2008).

#### 3.1 Pivotal Painting Movements Influencing Modern Art

Throughout history, there have been various pivotal painting movements that have influenced modern art. Some of these are discussed as follows:

### 3.2 Impressionism

Impressionism is a landmark in the world of modern painting that significantly reshaped the way we look at artwork. It was brought forth in the 1870s, with transient effects of light and the atmosphere in scenes of everyday life in the focus, using impressionistic and spontaneous brush strokes as well as vibrant colors (Wango, 2022). The style was not only unique but also a bold move in painting, which led to many painters approaching representation in a completely different way.

### 3.3 Cubism

Cubism, mainly created by Picasso and Braque in 1907, was the beginning of the break in the way professionals painted and represented faces as they cut complex forms into geometric shapes and at the same time showed several perspectives (Wango, 2022). The abandonment of the idea of a stable reference point, and instead replacing it with the concept of a fluid and relative representation of space, forced viewers to reconsider their perception of it (Wango, 2022) (Fig 6).



Figure 6: Cubism

### 3.4 Surrealism

Surrealism, which showed up in the 1920s, visualized the deep inner consciousness and the dreams as components that were not possible to construct using the rational mind. By introducing the multitude of happenings over events, it sought to open the viewer's mind and unlock mysteries (Wango, 2022).

### 3.5 Abstract Expressionism

Abstract Expressionism, a movement that evolved in the 1940s and 1950s, aimed at denoting spontaneous, emotional ideas with the help of non-figurative art. It was exemplified by Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko who used bright colors and expressive brushing strokes (Vučković & Nikodijević, 2022). The emphasis on the exact expression and exploration of the subconscious laid the way for the movement, which came after this artistic style (Fig 7).



**Figure 7:** Abstract Expressionism

### 3.6 Minimalism

The 60s introduced the concept of minimalism, reducing art to its innermost components, based on essential geometric forms, with basic industrial components as the main way of expressing extremely stripped-down and pristine artworks (de Souza Bierrenbach, 2017). Modulation, condensation, and minuscule repetition were purposely used to display the universal facts instead of excessive embellishments.

### 3.7 Pop Art

Since the origin of Pop Art in the 50s, artists have used mass media images in their works, often promoting reproduction techniques that society uses in the industrial production of goods, breaking barriers with the traditional understanding of art (de Souza Bierrenbach, 2017). It was a process through which trivial objects were turned into art, the material used



to blur the line between the high and the low culture and therefore, making the purpose of critical awareness about mass consumption and media saturation very clear (Fig 8).



Figure 8: Pop Art

#### 4. DIFFERENCE AND CONTRAST ANALYSIS

The basic distinguishing factors between modern architecture and painting in medium, technological application, and mode of expression are (de Souza Bierrenbach, 2017). For instance, canvas, pigment, and brushes are the most common tools for painting, whereas architecture has to employ concrete, steel, and glass to result in physical buildings (Campos, 2005). Architectural approaches are based on design, engineering, and construction processes, while painting techniques depend on brushwork, color blending, and composition. Concerning representation, modern architecture mostly stands for functional, rational, depictions of a departure from the traditional forms. On the other hand, modern painting tends to explore abstraction, subjectivity, and innovative ways of representing reality (Campos, 2005). Architectural art is demonstrated through building design, spaces, and materials, yet in contrast, painting is represented in its

two-dimensional surfaces, colors, and brushstrokes (Campos, 2005). Furthermore, the representation of architecture and that of painting is totally contrasting (Mladenović, 2013). Painting could be displayed easily yet architecture is mostly exhibited by drawings, models, and photos. The perception and experience of architecture are evident in its physical presence and may be the most salient factor in the enjoyment of architecture; on the other hand, paintings can solely be enjoyed through visual representation (Mladenović, 2013). Nevertheless, architecture and painting draw differently on themes such as urbanization, technology, and philosophical reasoning (Tellios, 2012). Paintings work around philosophical or conceptual ideas through expressive techniques and media while architecture is more about functionality, efficiency, and the use of modern technology and materials. Urbanism and technological advancements are manifested in architecture in different dimensions via new modeling approaches, formal speculation, and the application of natural and organic forms (Tellios, 2012). On the other hand, paintings are perfect at creating spatial illusions and adding to the characteristically artistic and expressive features of the architectural atmosphere (Pidlisna et al., 2023). Both of these art forms focus on philosophical inquiry yet in architecture, it is expressed through the architectural problem-solving norms and alternative solutions that define architectural thinking by offering approximation answers to an uncertain future (Fisher, 2019). Paintings regard philosophical themes through their ability to depict ideas in expressive and artistic ways, while architecture deals with philosophical questions through its practical and innovative methodology that gives value to functionality and usability.

## 5. FAMOUS PAINTINGS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE ART WORLD:

### 5.1 Les Demoiselles d'Avignon

Pablo Picasso was the greatest artist of the 20th century, among whose works are revolutionary that merged the past with the present and changed the usual classification of art forms (Galenson, 2009). *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907) and the *Guernica* (1937) are the perfect examples of representational art that challenged established laws of painting and introduced Cubism, which focuses on deconstructing objects into geometric shapes (Galenson, 2009). Picasso's impact on the art world and society could be regarded as profound as he broke the conventional way of

viewing art, allowing artists to discover creative ways of extracting pieces of the appearance of the art world. This reinvented how we perceive abstract art and it also makes the viewers put in more time and effort for interaction with art in a more active and intellectually engaging manner (Fig 9).



**Figure 9:** Les Demoiselles d'Avignon

## 5.2 Number. 5

Jackson Pollock is one of the pioneers in American art, being the best in the Abstract Expressionist movement, such as his drip painting *Number. 5*, made by pouring and splattering paint onto canvases (Galenson, 2009). Pollock's original technique and proficiency in conveying a picture through gestural abstraction rather than precise representation transformed the world of art, marking the beginning of a new era of artistic expression. He extended his influence in a wider scope, engaging other artists to sail in his majestic boat of the subconscious and his belief in painting being the way of self-freedom and a creative encounter with oneself (Fig 10).



**Figure 10:** Number .5



### 5.3 The Persistence of Memory

Salvador Dalí painted several surrealist pictures like *The Persistence of Memory* (1931) depicting scenes of dreamy and drop-shaped clocks in a desert. Dali built on the characteristic of surrealism as a rebellious acquisition of conventional molds of "reality" and common sense, stunning and disorientating the spectator as a result. Intrigued by the seeming relationship between dreams and reality, he introduced innovative metaphorical expressions that provoked many artists to plunge into the realm of the unconscious, which further helped them to dive into the depths of the human psyche in their works (Husso, 2019) (Fig 11).

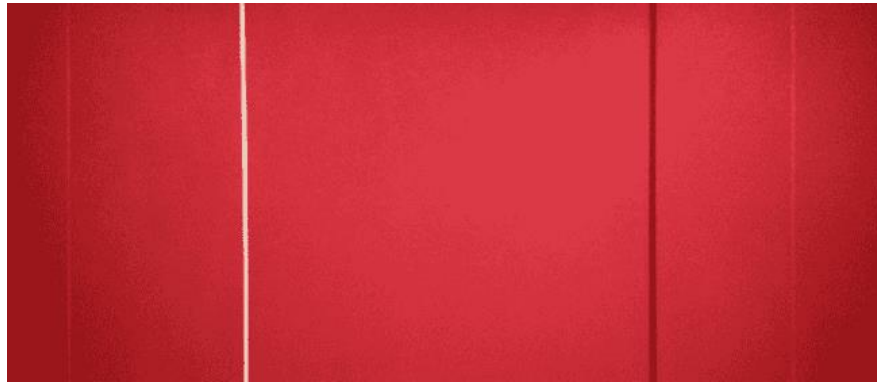


**Figure 11:** Persistence of Memory

### 5.4 Vir Heroicus Sublimis

Barnett Newman used large swaths of colors in his paintings as color fields, such as *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* (1950-1951), which created an impression of sublimity, objectifying the spiritual features of abstract art (Dubreuil, 2009). Newman's work pushed boundaries of size and palette, contributing to a new direction in painting. Through this, the subject became the means of contemplation on the treatment of purely aesthetic patterns. Through his paintings that offered glorification of minimalism and the sublime, he inspired the use of such an approach by subsequent generations of artists compelling them to expand their boundaries and search for a spiritual dimension in art (Fig 12).

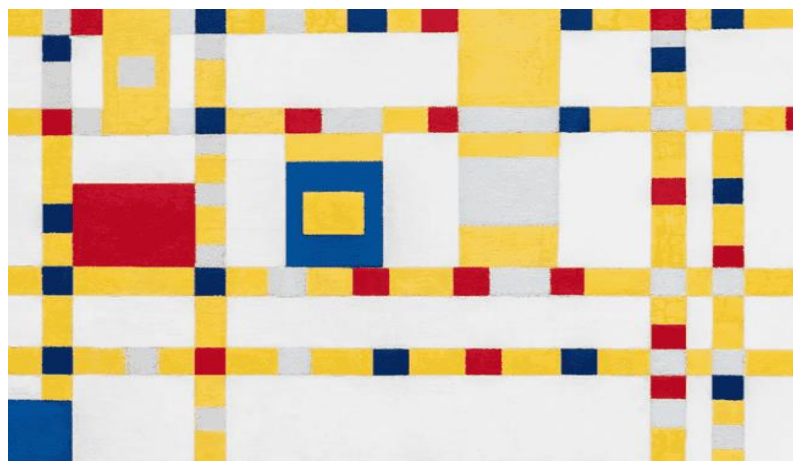




**Figure 12:** Vir Heroicus Sublimis

### 5.5 Broadway Boogie Woogie

The paintings of Piet Mondrian like *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (1942-43) present a new approach to composition where the artist reduced the elements of painting to lines, rectangles, and colors of primary schemes reminiscent of his pursuit of pure abstraction (Dubreuil, 2009). Modern people especially appreciated Mondrian's efforts to create harmony and order that to a greater degree corresponded with their lives. It was the simplicity and clarity of form that created this fascination. It also explains the everlasting relevance of abstraction in artistic expression, with respect to a true depiction of the nature of perceived reality as well as human experience (Fig 13).



**Figure 13:** Broadway Boogie Woogie

## 6. RENOWNED ARCHITECTURE AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON ARCHITECTURE, CULTURE, AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

### 6.1 Sydney Opera House

Located in the Sydney Harbour, the Sydney Opera House is a masterpiece of modern architecture. It was designed by the Danish

architect Jørn Utzon during a design competition in the late 1950s to build a new cultural center for Sydney (Malinovskaya, 2020). The unique wave-form concrete shells of the building were pioneering and innovative architectural solutions that went beyond the furthest styles of traditional architectural styles (Kamionka, 2018). Its construction and eventual global fame not only spring life into the Sydney skyline but also became a symbol of Australia's cultural and architectural innovation. The theatrical house has been a revelation to the substantiality of architecture, culture, and urban development the world over, manifested in its function as a medium for artistic expression, a pull for tourists, and a stimulus for urban regeneration (Fig 4).



**Figure 14:** Sydney Opera House

## 6.2 Guggenheim Museum

Frank Lloyd Wright designed the Guggenheim Museum in New York City as another radical departure from museum architecture in the late 1950s; which was considered a new and innovative building in the Museum world (Malinovskaya, 2020). Its coiling ramp gallery and upturned cone design were unparalleled and apprehensible designs that were copied multiple times by other artists. The revolutionary design of Guggenheim helped to challenge the long-established museum structure and made the experience more interactive and captivating for the public. Its effect on architecture and urban development transcended its physical structure since it modified the relationship between art, architecture, and public space by evolving a new approach to cultural institutions leading to the introduction of this in the rest of the world (Fig 15).



**Figure 15:** Guggenheim Museum

### 6.3 Centre Pompidou

The Centre Pompidou in Paris, designed by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers in the 1970s, is an exemplary case of the inside-out style, characterized by open structure and services on the exterior (Malinovskaya, 2020). This landmark symbolized a modern way of thinking about museum architecture. Pompidou's communicative and experimental design not only reanimated the historic district of Beaubourg but also appeared as a sign of the cultural dynamism and architectural experimentation of Paris. It is known for its flexible and adaptable spaces, which have encouraged interdisciplinary involvement and cultural exchange, hence becoming the city's heart where creativity and innovation are the core (Fig 16).



**Figure 16:** Centre Pompidou

### 6.4 Brasilia

Brasilia, the capital city of Brazil, planned by Lucio Costa and Oscar



Niemeyer in 1957, stands as an example of urban planning and architecture with its futuristic buildings, imposing civic scale, and different functional areas of cities (Malinovskaya, 2020). Among the other great architects of the period, Niemeyer's works were iconic and they served as the embodiment of a new Brazilian modernist style. Brasilia's urban planning and architectural masterpieces are not only an invitation to the country's development but also represent Brazil's cultural and political metamorphoses. The city keeps on having an immense influence on architecture, culture, and city development, which inspires several cities across the world to take an innovative perspective and re-design urban projects (Fig 17).



**Figure 17:** Brasilia

## 7. FINDINGS OF THE ANALYSIS

This descriptive analysis of modern architecture and paintings provides a great deal of insight and knowledge about the development of artistic statements in the modern age. Neither of them follows the tradition with the aim of attaining modernism, abstractionism, and disregard of ornamental aspects. The comparison helps to clarify the common elements of contemporary architects and painters such as the aim for simplicity, the creative experimentation on the forms and space, and the aspiration of demonstrating the issues of modern life. Nevertheless, painting is usually associated with feelings and intangibles as opposed to architecture, which is focused on practicality. In modern architecture, the most important things are being simple, geometric, and technological while modern paintings can be a way to look into the subconscious, metaphysical, and



political aspects of life. Ironically, in spite of these different routes, the two art forms converge in their mission of the reflection of the spirits of their time, as well as in their ability to evoke thinking and emotions in the viewers. Therefore, the descriptive analysis implies that the vibrant picture of the modern art scene includes both architecture and painting, which has inspired and transformed the creative and innovative activities of the present era.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The analysis of modern architecture and paintings reveals a creative relationship between shape, performance, and innovative ideologies. From the influential movements in paintings to contemporary architecture, these art forms have refurbished people's understanding of space, beauty, and experience. In terms of looking to the future, modern art studies give us meaningful knowledge about the development of creativity and how art and society overlap. Art studies and practices in the future might be enhanced through the adoption of interdisciplinary techniques, displayed by a fusion of architectural forms of the present and psychological portraits of notable painters and architects. Through the exploration of the links between these art forms, the artists and researchers can create new ways of imagination, revolution, and cultural criticism, hence the artistic environment is only to improve in generations to come.

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