

Optical rhythms: Optical rhythm aesthetic values and their Effects on the artwork

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Abstract

This research deals with "the aesthetic values of visual rhythm and its impact on the work of art", as it is concerned with the study of the nature of visual rhythm on the basis that it is an active element in aesthetics. The researcher's artistic endeavor, which is compatible with her interest in this subject, is a good example as it included many paintings through which the researcher expressed the element of visual rhythm.

The researcher's goal in addressing this topic was to identify different rhythm types and forms, and the research also offers an analysis of the visual rhythm in the artworks of leading artists in the field.

Among the findings of this research, the researcher found that a number of reasons focused on the fact that the beauty of the work of art stems from within, putting into consideration that an artwork is a structure of the relationship between forms, and that the visual rhythm encompasses, as it is shown in the results of the research, all the elements of the painting such as shapes, lines and colors. Thus, the visual rhythm is important in achieving the aesthetic objective of the work of art, and thus the aesthetic value of visual rhythm in the visual arts is achieved.

Keywords:

Visual rhythm – musical rhythm - pattern - repetition.

Introduction:

The word rhythm was first associated with music, then it was borrowed into use in the field of fine arts. Rhythm in music is defined as intervals between musical notes in terms of length. It is known in the art of composition as the intervals that the eyes need to move from a color or form or shape to another. In this context the French critic *Charles Baudelaire* (1821-1867) saw that "all our senses respond to various artistic stimuli, but the sense of sight and hearing are linked to a deeper aesthetic level." As plastic arts depend mainly on the sense of sight, and the rest of the senses soon follow.

Herbert Reed tells us in his book "Art Today" that different art styles have evolved throughout history prompting artists to look for the essence of an object or what is inherent in it, which builds within the artist significant signs closely related to their daily life filled with lines, shapes and forms which offer a kind of meaning of the functional perfection of the work of art. (Reed, No date)

Fouad Zakaria defines rhythm as an organization of the intervals between the units of the artwork. This organization may be for the intervals between the elements of the artwork such

as shapes, sizes, colors or elements' direction and the concept of rhythm includes the relationships that exist between time and space." (Zakaria, 1977)

"Art is not a relic preserved by memory, or stored by feeling, but by a visual subject, with the power of evidence, in which shapes and colors move under the control of color forces, and light, driving the artistic imagination," says Dr. *Zakaria Ibrahim* in his book "*Art Problem*". (Ibrahim, *Art Problem* 1960)

From the above it is clear to us that rhythm is in fact a familiar phenomenon in man himself, from the rhythm of the beating heart to the interchangeable repetitive state of wakefulness and sleep. Rhythm in the universe is clear between the sequence of night and day and the succession of seasons and in the system of the rotation of the Earth, the sun, and the moon. Rhythm is the basis of design as well; it appears in the organization of the visual elements within an artwork, which characterizes rhythm, as it could be surprising, repetitive, or interchangeable.

Research problem:

The most important problem of this research is trying to identify the importance of rhythm in the work of art and the extent of its impact on the works of art in general and on the work of the researcher in particular.

Research importance:

The importance of this research lies in the recognition of the importance of rhythm, the impact generated by rhythm within the artwork and the extent to which it is used. The works of the researcher show pictorial evidence of her keen interest in expressing the great importance of visual rhythm in painting.

Research goals:

The research aims to identify different rhythm patterns and forms, and then to identify the positive impact generated from it, and what is possible to benefit from it within the art work in general and the work of the researcher in particular.

Search assumptions:

The research assumes the ability of introducing different definitions of rhythm, as well as seeing rhythm importance and resulting effect within works of art in general and on the researcher's artworks in particular.

Research methodology:

The research follows the descriptive analytical approach to describe and analyze the concept of rhythm within works of art, in addition to the experimental approach through the presentation and analysis of the work of the researcher.

Research limitations:

Time limitations: from the end of the year 2017 to the end of the year 2018.

Spatial/location Limitations: The Arab Republic of Egypt, Cairo, where the works were exhibited at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Helwan University's Main Exhibition Hall, from November 18 to November 24, 2018.

Theoretical Framework

First, before starting to present and analyze the researcher's experience and identify the impact of rhythm in her work, we have to first recognize the impact of rhythm on a number of great artists' works such as:

First: Visual rhythm in the works of the artist Jackson Pollock:

Jackson Pollock is one of the most visually acclaimed and creative artists in the world, his works has a revolutionary sense that has helped free art from its traditional and popular limitations which led some critics to describe him by saying that "he is an artist led by his own demons". (Nabil 2017)

Jackson Pollock is the American painter and pioneer of the abstract expressionist movement, who is considered one of the world's most influential artists in his generation and after. *Jackson Pollock* is best known for his technical innovations such as "pouring", a method that shows how the artist was able to show a harmonious visual and dynamic rhythm.

Jackson Pollock Autumn Rhythm No. 30

This painting is one of Jackson Pollock's most famous paintings, and when you look at the work at first glance, you can see a colorful rhythm that appears like a mesh on top of his canvas, in which the artist uses pouring technique.

The artist's issue here was not to depict in his work objects, faces or natural landscapes, but to go beyond what is obviously understood through visual rhythm that characterized Pollock's paintings. The artists' paintings evoke viewers' unconscious mind to formulate images and symbols that are then sent to their conscious mind. The artist's works may appear chaotic but through his dripping and pouring paint method Pollock succeeded in creating a visual rhythm in the form of abstract paintings.



Jackson Pollock - Abstract expressionism - Enamel paint on canvas
266.7cm×525.8cm - 1950 -Metropolitan Museum.

Practical Framework

Number of paintings: Twelve Painting works.

Material used and the surface: oil colors with collage and spray colors (air brush technique) in some paintings.

Painting Sizes: Four paintings 100×70 cm and eight paintings 50×45 cm.

Artistic Style: Largely follows the abstract style.

Analysis of the Paintings

The researcher's interest in this practical experience focused on visual rhythm and the aesthetics it brings to the technical work.

Rhythm in its multiple forms is a term that means the consistent echo of movement combining unity and change. Painting in general aim to find new realities more interesting than reality itself, and artistic production, especially in visual arts, must be represented in the form of a subject that speaks to the viewer in a special language, this language uses rhythm through lines, colors, or values to investigate and bring forth these new realities as well as the artists' own special emotional thoughts and visions.

The researcher used many materials and treatments as her tools in producing her artistic vision in the paintings introduced in this research. So her use of the raw oil colors close to her heart since her early years of study at the Faculty of Fine Arts, with the use of paper of different colors and texture (collage) and mixing them in a variety of ways on the surface of the canvas, which helped to achieve a vision that the researcher tried to achieve in her work in a certain way, and then the researcher completed her technical experience using the method of spraying colors (airbrushing), which has had a great impact in giving a sense of mass form as well as emphasizing the sense of distance and proximity of the elements on the surface of the canvas. Now, in light of these ideas, I will talk about two works as an example of my artistic experiment in visual rhythms.

A Painting titled: Lights 2010

In this work it is difficult for us to determine the time and place in which I wanted to draw these elements with this great geometrical sense. The work is cloaked in mystery through the use of color and light in general. We can see light moving smoothly on top of the surfaces of these soft geometric shapes, creating a visual rhythm that inspires calm and stillness. The composition in this painting, combines in harmony both the physical and the spiritual; as the rhythm created in this painting owes its power to both the use of simple geometric shapes and colors and at the same time to the abstract feel of the painting as a whole which elevates the mundane into the spiritual.



Lights - Oil colors and collage on canvas and the method of spraying colors - 70x100cm.

Painting titled: Pulses.

This work is an important stage of my style development in surface processing, and I have tried to formulate a somewhat different visual content than my previous works, as my use of small pieces of copper has had a great impact on giving the work surface visual rhythm with a special textured character. The black strokes of color used in the painting that we see here and there scattered in the space stand in contrast with the painting light violet, white and light gray background. The colored shapes in the painting appear to take opposite directions, as some appear to be taking an upward direction while others seem to be taking a downward direction creating a distinctive visual movement and rhythm.



Pulses - Oil colors with copper pieces on canvas - 50x45cm.

Conclusion

In this research, I tried to discuss the importance of rhythm within the work of art through an explanation and analysis of my work as well as the works of some of the great artists of painting, and it became clear to me that the word "rhythm" means the harmonious repetition of elements echoed on the surface of a painting.

The famous philosopher John Dewey said that rhythm in fine arts means the repetition of any element or unit of similar form, and the interval between one unit and another is called a break, Dewey also confirms that there are countless examples of rhythm in Nature; such as a spider's web, the arrangement of leaves on a tree and many other examples (Goodness 2008).

Rhythm has great weight in the success of a work or art. It is one of the topmost principles of a good composition in painting. Thus, in all my paintings introduced herein, I gave visual rhythm all my attention and the leading role I believe it ought to occupy.

Results and Recommendations:

First: results:

- 1- The aesthetic values of rhythm were a source of inspiration for new and innovative compositions in the researcher's work.
- 2- Rhythm played a big role in achieving the aesthetic values the researcher tried to introduce in her artworks.
- 3- Visual rhythm within the works of the researcher has had a significant impact on the recipient.

Second: recommendations:

- To increase attention towards studies around the importance of rhythm in artworks of different artistic fields.
- Taking advantage of rhythm as an element of composition in the production of paintings of different pictorial atmospheres.

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