

The drama of light and shadow and their impact within the artwork

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Abstract

Scott Robert Gillam says “The contrast in the visual field is the basis of the visual perception of things that fall within our field of vision, when we perceive the shape of the form”, this means that there must be differences in the visible field, and wherever there are differences there must be some contrast, and this is the basis of visual perception of different bodies. (Scott 1968)

The visual arts, whether they are two-dimensional such as photographic works, or three-dimensional works such as sculpture and architecture - when they are located in our visual fields, they awaken our visual senses and push them to pay attention to the light waves coming from reflective surfaces of all kinds. Immediately, our sensory organs, nervous system, and brain centers are alerted, and eventually respond to these influences.

Light has proven that it was and still is one of the most important elements of the drama of formation for the art of photography, and the transition from one artistic era to another was contingent on changing the form and content of light as an advanced plastic element from one image to another. Methods and evolution of performance methods.

In fact, light and shadow, with their special capabilities, had a direct impact on the various photographers who controlled the different forces between light and shadow and were able to adapt them to serve their artistic goals, and their own ideas.

It is worth mentioning that the basis of (my pictorial concept), which dominates my paintings with this artistic experience, is focused on the dramatic value of both light and shadow within my artwork, which was not known before in my previous artistic experiences, and I hope that I have succeeded in my attempt to achieve the dramatic value within my artistic experience paintings.

Key words

drama, light, shadow.

Introduction:

Light, with its special physical nature, has proven that it was and still is an important vital energy on which the visual aspect of plastic arts has depended on throughout the ages. Art Generator. (Fischer 1971)

We also find that “The shadow is one of the most important artistic elements in the construction of the plastic painting, as it contributes to creating the illusion of the third dimension and giving the artwork a dramatic effect. Employing it in forms of a geometric or organic nature or carrying the two types together according to intellectual concepts to create new trends and ideas that enrich the artwork” (Al-Tabji 2021).

And considering that light is the physical effect of vision, and it determines the circumference of the eyes, and the distinction between the different features of the visible bodies, in terms of shape, color, number, size, etc., and that is what these bodies reflect from the light on our eyes, which led many aesthetic scientists to consider it the most important elements of composition for the art of photography.

When we are facing the image, some light stimuli must come and alert our senses, our nervous system, and our brain centers, and they appear in this case in the form of lines, colors, bright and dark areas.

John Alton says in the book "Painting with Light" that in order for the photographer to have the appropriate lighting for the subject of his painting, he must first start with the darkness of the place completely - because this helps the pupil of the eye to widen - and then shine the main light, so that it shines on the main faces and objects after reflecting on it, noting that the lights used to illuminate the subject not to meet the photographer's eyes while he is practicing his artwork on this basis, the lighting devices are adjusted to obtain the intensity of illumination appropriate to the psychological atmosphere to be photographed. (Alton n.d.)

In fact, the light has important psychological effects, which many photographers were able to make good use of in the art of oil painting when they found the appropriate artistic formulas to express the different psychological atmospheres in their works, and then changed the atmosphere of their psychological scenes and even the usual appearance of things.

And whether those photographers belong to the eras when fixed artificial lights were used inside closed ceremonies, or those artists who went out to the bosom of nature to paint outdoor under the bright sunshine, and in the natural daylight full of vitality and renewal, or those who belong to modern times that were used in it, the new possibilities that modern technology ensured for photographers to express light in their photographic works, they all agree on the importance of light within the artwork in all its forms.

Research problem:

One of the major research problems is...

The nature of light and shadow in the artwork and the extent of its impact on artwork in general and the work of the research experience in particular.

Research importance:

Recognizing the importance of the elements of light and shadow, what their influence is within the artwork of major international artists, and in the work of the researcher's experience as well? Study and analysis of the various plastic aspects of light and shadow to derive important results that help in the process of artistic creativity in the field of photography.

Research aims:

Identifying the dramatic role of light and shadow in the works of some artists.

Implementation of artworks based on emphasizing the dramatic role of light and shadow in contemporary artwork.

Research hypotheses:

Studying and analyzing the various plastic aspects of light and shadow can help in the process of artistic creativity in the field of photography.

Research Methodology:

The research follows the comparative analytical method to analyze and compare the elements of light and shadow within the works of great artists, in addition to the experimental method through the presentation and analysis of the researcher's figurative works.

Search limits:

Temporal limits: The temporal limits of the research are in the period from the end of 2017 AD to 2018 AD.

Spatial boundaries: The Arab Republic of Egypt, especially Cairo, as the works were produced by the researcher and exhibited in the Great Hall of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Helwan University, from Sunday 4th of March until 10th of March 2018.

Objective Boundaries: Objective Boundaries are represented in the analysis and study of the elements of light and shadow and the drama they cause within the researcher's work.

Theoretical framework of the research

In the beginning, and before starting to present and analyze the researcher's experience and get acquainted with the drama of light and shadow with her works, we had to first address artistic works, and light and shadow played a major role in their success. One of the most important is the painting "The Contemplative Philosopher" by the Dutch artist, Rembrandt 1606-1669. The contemplator of the painting finds a block of sunlight falling from the window next to the philosopher sitting in a room, and the eye looking at that painting can discern the positive impression of the gradation of light in a human design that surrounds the way of presence of light and the reflection of a mass of sunlight on the face of the philosopher, as if the light emanated from his person, as we find the other elements in the painting, and they received less light and distributed a thoughtful distribution bearing the dramatic character in darker colors than those that dominated the subject of the artwork.(Age 2013)



Rembrandt - the contemplative philosopher
Production in 1632 - 28 x 34 cm
The painting is an oil painting on an oak board
(Prometheus 2012)

Rembrandt leads us to the shadows of infinity through his mysterious darkness of emptiness that extends far beyond the space of his actual images.

Research framework

Number of plates: thirteen paintings works.

The material used and the surface: oil colors with collage, as well as the use of airbrush, in some paintings.

The size of the works: two panels 145×150 cm, one panel 200×150 cm, one panel 130×180 cm, one panel 80×100 cm, and eight works 70×100 cm.

Artistic direction: The paintings of this exhibition combine the two directions of realism and abstraction.

Business explanation and analysis

I focused my interest in this practical experience on the drama caused by light and shadow within the artwork...

It helped me to achieve this dramatic sense of light and shadow is the diversity in the methods of performance between my use of oil colors as well as the texture of collage (paper scraps) this in addition to the method of spraying colors (airbrush) in some paintings, and the surface on which the work was executed was always straight canvases).

My method came to cut papers (collage) either in a regular or irregular way, according to what the artwork requires and the idea I take for paper clips, with the use of a high-strength adhesive material to maintain the cohesion of the papers on the surface despite the passage of time.

In this experiment, I also dealt with the raw materials of oil colors and dealt with them in various ways on the surface of the photographic work, in order to achieve my ideas with this experiment from work.

I can say that the diversity in these ways of performing would have given the experience a visual richness that was certainly reflected in the conscience.

The recipient of the artwork also helped in communicating the researcher's ideas smoothly and easily.

I theorized all the paintings of this experience, to clarify the philosophical and plastic content, and the methods of performance that I followed, when formulating these figurative works.

As my experience stems from a deep feeling and a strong desire to get to know the elements of light and shadow as important elements of the formation of the artwork, which prompted me to dig deeper and more, in order to identify their relationship with each of the line, space, perspective, color, and so on, in order to extract some important conclusions.

In light of that... It was this experience that I am happy to talk about and about the paintings I accomplished with them, as the main reason for creating these paintings is due to my strong desire to discover new facts that explain the eternal relationship that exists between light and shadow, where there is no shadow except in the presence of light, and in the absence of light the shadow disappears, and the dramatic sense between light and shadow, which I was always

looking for during the completion of the experiment, was not only possible for us to glimpse inside the works, but I felt the real drama in all stages of the work from its beginning to its end, it was a hard and interesting experience at the same time .

Work name - Blue Vase

Oil colors and some collage papers on canvas - workspace 150 x 190 cm.

I was looking forward in this work to give the dynamics of movement to the composition through the strong collision between strong bright lights and very dark shadows, and then the movement became more dramatic than before.

Also, the sense of dynamism of movement, the researcher tried to achieve - here - through the color spots related to bright light, in the midst of the very black background darkness, which made the scene appear in its general appearance, a mixture of (sparkle) and (darkness).

The artistic value of this work is that I was able to transform its (subtleties) into a tangible physical reality, and it helped me to use multiple (colored) areas of different degrees of red, blue, and orange, with various sprays of multi-grade white, which appears to be a lit torch, like those luminous torches, which we often saw in the paintings of the famous French photographer, Georges de Latour.

Here, the use of oil colors was predominant in the work, with little use of paper clips (collage), while the luminous parts appeared with circular elements in the background of the work using the spray method.



Conclusion:

This research dealt with an important topic, which is light and shadow and their dramatic effect within the artwork.

The method of using shadows and lights is one of the most important means that determine the perfection of the artwork and its personality, and there are multiple conventions for this plastic element, and black and what is in between of an innumerable number of shades.

Light is a highly fluctuating phenomenon, as it always changes in the degree of its intensity and the angle of its fall, so it was difficult to represent it with something fixed and specific such as a line, and for this we introduced the process of shading and the light became represented in its gradation between bright white and dark black.

The most important findings and recommendations:**First: the results.**

- The researcher found that light and shadow have a great impact on the works of her artistic experience, through which the success of the artwork is complete.
- Light and shadow added to the researcher's work with this experiment a different dramatic atmosphere.

The light and shadow had a great effect in giving the illusion of anthropomorphizing the elements on a two-dimensional surface within the researcher's work.

Second: recommendations.

The researcher recommends that we continue to provide research on light and shadow to define its plastic importance in the art of photography in general, and in the art of contemporary photography in particular, due to its enormous potential that can help researchers in their creative work, and provide them with a huge flood of inspirations to invent new artistic methods in the fields of contemporary photography.

Also, by conducting specialized methodological studies on the elements of light and shadow and their relationship to the essence of creativity in the art of photography, in order to derive the correct objective criteria that can be used as a guide for creative work, and to invent new and advanced artistic methods that help us deepen our vision of light and shadow, until we are more convinced of its fine value in art, photography, and our ability to understand and taste it doubles.

The researcher also recommends the need to focus on the common importance of both light and shadow, as each complements the other, in the presence of light there is shadow and vice versa.

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