Artist Manifesto

Art reflects society and must be addressed thusly. Twenty-first century societal ideology lends itself to a narcissistic trend breeding selfishness and a lack of empathy. Artists fight social tendencies toward narcissism and strive to ensure a renaissance of empathetic views. An artist can be singular, yet encompassing, unique, yet conform, and free, yet restrained. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the artist to achieve and set standards in accordance with their own wants and desires.

Society's requisite to change or fit in should be met with debate to demolish ideals of accepted behavior, fanatical politics, or demanding administrations. Those approaching life with the spineless worship of the afore mentioned will be met with both internal and external rebellion. Contempt for difference is criminal. Being trapped by conventional thoughts is reckoned to riding an eternal rollercoaster, going around but nowhere. Throw away files of the mind promoting participation for its own sake. Maintain a poetic journey of positivity, a rhetoric of well-being, love of humanity, and well wishes for those who disagree. Demoralization runs rampant through today's culture. Harmony with individuality must be celebrated, uniqueness accepted, and understanding met with applause for variation.

Critics abound. Cognitive visions enhanced by imagination cannot be judged and are criticized by unknowing or prejudicial minds seeking affirmation for personal desires, tastes, or a weak need to be a part. Criticism is a singular discourse, devoid of the universality sought by every artist and their desire for independence and uniqueness. In artists, there is an innate distrust for sameness, disdain for unity, and a perseverance seeking freedom. Critics liken their word to the word of God believing they have the power to determine quality by a mere wave of approval. They generally have no real qualifications other than a piece of paper or a boisterous pied piper voice beckoning willing ears.

Enough about my disdain for certain critics. In my mind, art should be beautiful, bring happiness, harkening memories of good times with positivity and love. To me, it is no more complicated. It is without judgement or malice toward ANYTHING or ANYONE. Following the formalist teachings and organization of art historian Clement Greenberg, I would like to discuss some of the aspects of art that are important to me: form and the pure visual aspects, which includes color, technique and craftsmanship. I look for the brightest, purest colors that I can find and do not own a tube of ivory black, mars black, lamp black or even Payne's grey. Multiple tubes of magenta, scarlet lake, cobalt turquoise, and French ultramarine are included in a palette that applauds a joy of life, nature, and love!

Technique is critical, and how an artist performs a task is often imperative to the success or failure of a work. A piece may fail strictly because the technique was faulty. Close attention must be made that every step … every specific step is executed with only the best technique. When technique fails, more education can glean better results and should be addressed. In today's world, there is no excuse for poor technique. There are too many resources available at the click of a mouse to educate the artist. The technical aspect of art is often underrated and not acknowledged by patrons and critics alike, but to the quintessential professional artist, it is second only to craftsmanship.

Craftsmanship is by far the most important aspect of creating a work that will stand the test of time. The integrity of the craftsmanship can never go unnoticed or unacknowledged as it goes to the longevity and respectability of the work. In a painting, for instance, the wood of the stretchers is straight and clean from splinters, the canvas is of appropriate weight and tooth, the canvas is assembled, accurately measured, squared, or shaped, the surface is well gessoed and prepared by sanding and/or color priming, the under-drawing, as applicable, is accurate using appropriate medium, the pigments are the purest and most color fast available, the application is clean, noting attention to detail, and the final presentation is professionally complete.

It should further be noted that unimportant to me are subject matter or my work's relationship to the seen world. What I paint is not as important as how I paint. Iconography may not be relative to identity, but form is. I agree with Greenberg that painting, and in my mind, all art, can only be critiqued by addressing the formal aspects of the work. A critic can only judge a work regarding form and its historical nature. My goal, as an artist, is to present work that is pleasing to the eye and formally executed with perfected elements of art.

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