

How do artists express emotion through the artistic movements of expressionism and abstract expressionism?

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Introduction

My undertaking of this dissertation started from personal motives as a result of the psychological turmoil I went through at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. This coincided with the death of my brother. The feelings of sadness, anger and anxiety that appear on the faces I used to draw using ink and coffee was the first cathartic stage.

The exploration of how emotion can be expressed by facial features led me to Expressionism and how expressionist artists evoke their inner feelings and sensations roaming within their soul onto their work.

My thoughts then moved to artists who tried to express the complexities of their sadness and anxiety, notably focussing on the portrait of Dr. Gachet by Vincent Van Gogh and *the scream* by Edvard Munch.

I will also focus on the details of the origin of *Die Brücke*, which critics agree was the cornerstone of the Expressionism movement, in addition to some of their works.

Then continuing onto abstract expressionism, examining how the complete departure from accurate representation of the subject is able to express feelings in a completely different way. Some of the prominent artists of this movement will be discussed and the methods they employed. In particular this dissertation will explore the abstract expressionism that arose from the New York school, which was completely different from the abstraction art of Kandinsky that arose in Europe. I will single out Arshile Gorky, who is considered one of the most important Abstract Expressionist artists in detail, and focus on one of his works, in which he remembers his childhood days. I felt this work was very similar to the personal work that I am currently immersed in exploring, expressing emotion and memories of my childhood days in Baghdad.

As an Iraqi artist it was important for me to mention Dia Azzawi in this dissertation, one of the most important Iraqi abstract artists, who combined expressionism and abstract expressionism in his works. He is an ongoing source of inspiration to me.

To not limit oneself to accurate representation of the subject is central to how the artists I will discuss express emotion.

Expressionism Movement

The Expressionism movement began in 1905 when four young architectural students in the small village of Dresden announced this art movement, calling it *Die Brücke* (The Bridge). The name is inspired by the large number of bridges in the German city of Dresden in 1905, which could be imagined at the time as a link between the worlds of art.

Erich Heckel, one of the four founders himself said in a recorded conversation:

“Schmidt- Rottluff suggested the name ‘Brücke’ because it was a word with a number of meanings that did not suggest a particular programme, but would link one side with another” (Elger, 1994).

These young people took it upon themselves to play a crucial role in motivating other young citizens to revolt against social academic traditions through art in a different modern style that expresses the artist's instinct and perspective on life, in which the artist did not seek to depict reality, but rather depict the emotions and responses elicited by events within the person. The Expressionists wanted to create a world free of conflicts that sought to achieve ideals far from the society that existed at the time and which was controlled by political forces ruled by Kaiser Wilhelm II. It worked against industrial progress. They saw the rapid rise of industrial progress as an acceleration towards war (Dagen, 2012). *Die Brücke* artists were obsessed with pitting themselves against the stifling traditions and social hypocrisy that prevailed at the time in European social life. They believed that with their principles they could overthrow the old, deeply oppressive regime, and that a better society could emerge. These feelings were represented in bold expressive paintings (Herbert, 1983).

Expressionist style spread widely in all areas of art; literature, theatre, cinema and architecture. This movement began in Germany and spread to the rest of Europe from 1910 until 1925. The temporary decline of this movement in 1925 is attributed to the rise of National Socialism. It can be argued that the emergence of a group of *Die Brücke* artists is the cornerstone of, and the first launch of Expressionism.

The main characteristic of expressive art is the transfer of personal feelings around the subject instead of being satisfied with observing it, thus it is in direct contrast to the impressionist style that remains attached to the external surface. This puts the emotion and human condition of the artist and the subject at the forefront. The most obvious way this is conveyed is with the artist's use of intense colours, almost mimicking that of the Fauves, agitated brushstrokes, and distortion and exaggeration of the subject's features (Elger, 1994).



Figure 1 (left): Bal du moulin de la galette (1876)

Figure 2 (right): Street, Berlin (1913)

The contrast can be seen in the impressionist painting of *Bal du moulin de la galette* by Pierre-Auguste Renoir in 1876 (figure 1) before the rise of expressionism with *Street, Berlin* by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner in 1913 (figure 2). One work is attempting to capture a moment in time with careful consideration to light and realism, whereas the other imprints the artist's feelings onto the distorted and colourful work.

Among this group, Kirchner is perhaps the most famous and influential. Kirchner saw in the emotional works of Van Gogh and Munch a striking example of the kind of art that expresses the exoticism of the human being.

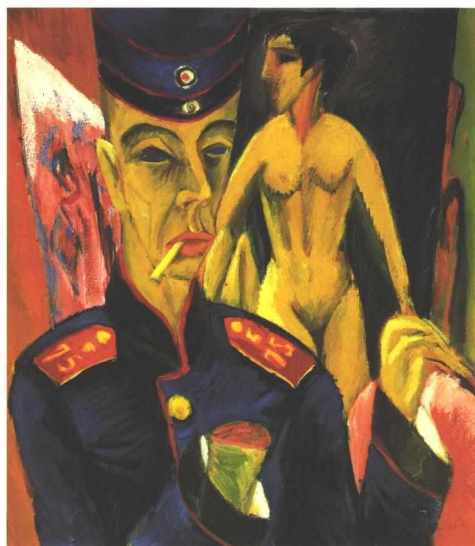


Figure 3: Self-portrait as a soldier (1915)

In his painting, *self-portrait as a soldier* (figure 3), he depicts his psychological and physical suffering and his inability to follow up on his artwork. This painting shows Kirchner, dressed in field artillery ware, moving away from a nude woman who is standing completely still behind him, and he is looking at us with dark hollow eyes that cannot be seen through. The hostile red that dominates his surroundings amplifies this darkness. He leans with his left hand on the edge of the chair so that he does not lose his balance. And his other hand is transformed into a bleeding stump, almost as if he is telling the beholder that his creativity is dead. His body is crying out, having lost all the features of life as a result of his suffering. A weakness afflicts him. The artist's emotional state is imprinted on this composition, a clear work of expressionism.

Kirchner's works are characterized by rough faces with sharp, alert features, tense brush strokes, bright colours, and harsh curved lines that provoke the viewer. These works often capture the growing anxiety of Berlin society as signs of the first world war increase and his own anxiety (Elger, 1994).

Expressionism was given a more clear definition in the early 20th century with the foundation of the Expressionist movement by *Die Brücke*. However, the origin of expressionism can be traced back earlier to one artist in particular, Vincent Van Gogh. A decade after Van Gogh's death in 1890 and before the world became aware of the weight of Van Gogh's productivity, the younger generation of Expressionist artists found themselves heavily influenced by the paintings of Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, and Edvard Munch (Lloyd, 1991).

Such was the influence of Van Gogh on the Die Brücke artists that Emil Nolde, a founding member of this group suggested to his fellow members that they call themselves Van Goghiana instead of Die Brücke (Elger, 1994). Erich Heckel, one of the co-founders of Die Brücke, was already engaged in the experience with broken brushwork, as he found in Van Gogh's works a fertile source of his experience.

Emil Nolde had a spiritual relationship with Van Gogh, he even wrote to Schiefler the art collector, who bought two of Van Gogh paintings in 1905, one of them was *Jardin fleuri a Arles*, which he admired most:

"The two paintings by Van Gogh are so wonderful, their impression stays with me so long in this isolated corner of the world that I think back to them". (Gogh, Lloyd, Peppiat and Bridgewater, 2007).

Ronald S. Lauder, President of the Neue Galerie, said of Van Gogh:

(his) greatness goes beyond his brilliant draftsmanship and approach to colour and structure. Van Gogh is the artist who almost single-handedly brought a greater sense of emotional depth to painting. In that way, he can truly be called the father of Expressionism " (Neue Galerie, 2021).

Van Gogh: Portrait of Dr Gachet

Van Gogh can be seen to have several works considered 'masterpieces', I will focus my discussion on one in particular, *Portrait of Dr Gachet* (figure 4). In my own work I try to emulate and capture the emotions expressed in this masterpiece. It is a direct influence to me because I am myself on a journey of expressing the emotions found in human faces.

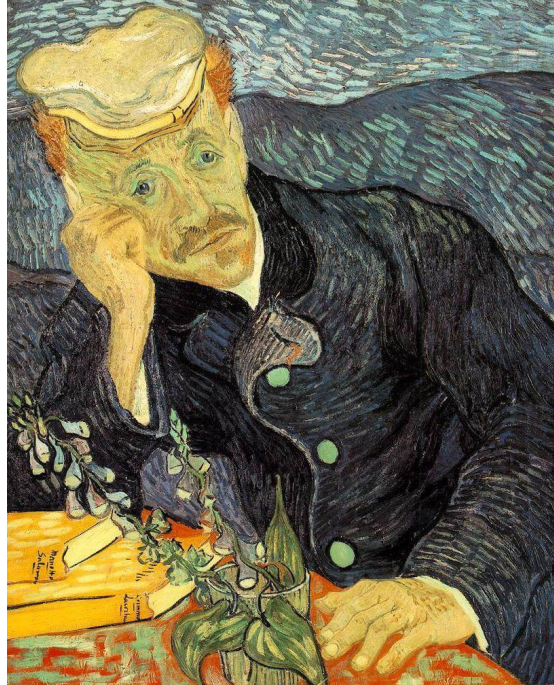


Figure 4: Portrait of Dr Gachet (1890)

In the spring of 1890, there was a difficult matter for Theo van Gogh to attend to and it needed a quick solution. His older brother Vincent, emotionally unstable and psychic, was in desperate need of a new resort after he was cleared to move out of Saint-Rémy-de-Provence (Cabanne, Woodward and Gogh, 1972).

Whilst in dire need of medical care and on the recommendation of the painter Camille Pissarro, Vincent sought the help of Dr. Gachet, an amateur painter known for his artistic sense and sympathy with artists. Vincent moved to the Auberge Ravoux situated near Dr. Gachet's home. When he first met Dr Gachet he was totally unimpressed, he wrote to his brother Theo:

"I think that we must not count on Dr Gachet at all. First of all, he is sicker than I am, I think, or shall we say just as much, so that's that. Now when one blind man leads another blind man, don't they both fall into the ditch" (Gogh, Jansen, Luijten and Bakker, 2009: letter 648).

But this impression did not last long, Dr. Gachet gained Vincent's trust easily by talking to him about his illness in a simple and decisive way, and his advice had a great impact on Vincent.

In another letter he wrote:

“I have seen Dr Gachet, who gives me the impression of being rather eccentric, but his experience as a doctor must keep him balanced enough to combat the nervous trouble from which he certainly seems to me to be suffering at least as seriously as I” (Gogh, Jansen, Luijten and Bakker, 2009: letter 635).

Later his views about Dr Gachet softened even more, so he wrote to his sister Wilhelmina:

“I have found a true friend, something like another brother, so much do we resemble each other physically and also mentally.” (Gogh, Jansen, Luijten and Bakker, 2009: letter W22).

Such was the friendship that grew between these two characters that Vincent painted a portrait of Dr Gachet. There are two verified portraits of Dr Gachet, who took care of Van Gogh in the last months of his life before he committed suicide (Steensma and Kyle, 2017). Both portraits contain a sombre, muted palette, and Dr. Gachet's expression is similar in both, what could be construed as the same empty sadness and melancholy (Portrait of Dr. Gachet, 1890 by Vincent Van Gogh, 2021).

What is distinctive about the paintings is that they depict the doctor sitting with his right hand resting on the table next to two books and a purple foxglove. Dr. Gachet's feeling of depression is translated and made visible here, by the way he rests his head on his right hand in a tilted way. He wrote to his fellow painter Paul Gauguin:

“I have a portrait of Dr Gachet with the heart-broken expression of our time” (Gogh, Jansen, Luijten and Bakker, 2009: letter 643)

The very striking thing about this portrait is the similarity between the artist and the subject. Prominent hooked nose and pointed face, Dr. Paul Gachet had yellow/brown hair and like Van Gogh's red hair, tended to be curly. The figure crumbles on the chair in such a bleak way as if he were Van Gogh himself - as if Van Gogh is portraying himself in the portrait of Dr Gachet (Costello and Storr, 2018).

The portrait is of a man whose face is filled with expressions of melancholy and deep sadness, and the colours are dark and heavy. As for the two books that are placed on the table in front of him and on which he is resting, they are bleak novels detailing a narrative that describes four artists whose artistic life is marked by failure.

Some have suggested that the foxglove placed on the table in the painting is a significance in Van Gogh's life. Van Gogh here gave the foxglove a deep purple colour but foxgloves can also be a warm yellow colour, perhaps the choice of exhibiting the foxglove in a deep purple is an indication of the deep sadness that overwhelms the subject. Gachet himself, as a herbalist and homeopathic doctor was perhaps using this digitalis to treat the seizures that consumed his life (Aronson and Ramachandran, 2006). On completing the portrait, Vincent wrote:

“I’ve done the portrait of Doctor Gachet with an expression of melancholy, which might often appear to be a grimace to those looking at the canvas... Sad but gentle but clear and intelligent, that’s how many portraits should be done...” (Gogh, Jansen, Luijten and Bakker, 2009: letter 886).

In Dr Gachet’s portrait it is not only the doctor’s depression that is illustrated but also Vincent’s. But this portrait is more than a painting depicting a subject submerged in depression, it also depicts a painting that binds two friends. Vincent beautifully captures the emotional state of Dr Gachet.

Edvard Munch: The Scream

An iconic work, painted in 1893 that articulates a powerful emotion is *the scream* (figure 5) by Edvard Munch. Although this work precedes the classic Expressionist movement, it is a work in the clarity of expressionistic thinking, capturing clearly all the elements of an expressionist work. Munch created a new vision that became acclaimed as an icon on the influence of modern art. Some consider it to be the *Mona Lisa* of our time (Lubow, 2006).

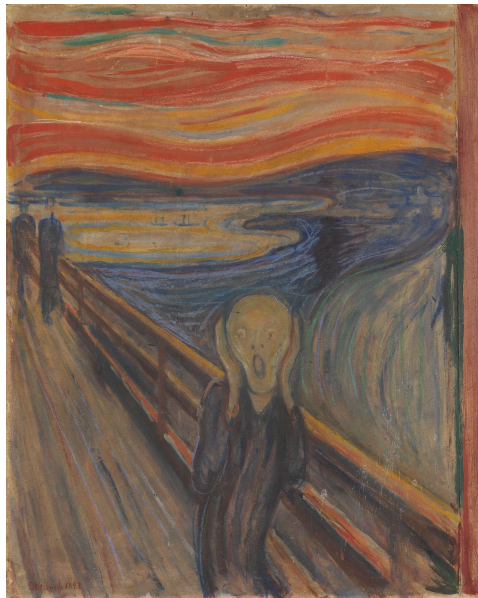


Figure 5: The Scream (1893)

Munch's work, a pastel on board, depicts a creature whose gender cannot be discerned, with eyes wide open, large and empty facing the viewer. Both hands press tightly to its ears, as if it did not want to hear the echo of its resounding scream. The creature is completely flat with a convulsed body resembling the twists of a worm (Müller-Westermann, 2005).

Munch depicts the nature surrounding this figure in a great swirling motion, the curving sky is reminiscent of the sky in Van Gogh's 1889 work, the *starry night*. However, the sky in Van Gogh's masterpiece conveys a gentle demeanour, whereas the one in Munch's masterpiece is dizzying and haunting since its curvature merges with that of the terrified creature. A state of anxiety and fear is reflected in nature (Heller, 1973).

In the background, but not far from this figure, there can be seen two people on the bridge completely rigid. They can be seen to be unaffected by the echoes of the scream itself, amplifying a feeling of loneliness.

The bright red and yellow sky, the blue and green of the surrounding river, and the dark fjord pick up the echoes of the scream and become distorted by it. The oppressive nature of this composition all combine to extoll a horrifying state of anxiety (Hodin, 1972). Munch recalls a scene in his diary that might be the inspiration for this work:

"I was out walking with two friends the sun began to set - suddenly the sky turned blood red - I paused, feeling exhausted, and leaned on fence- there was blood and tongues of fire above the blue- black fjord and the city - my friends walked on, and there I still stood, trembling with fear- and I sensed an endless scream passing through Nature" (Bischoff, 2016: 58).

In a short article Munch also wrote "Nature is formed by one's mood", and the oppressive nature drowning the creature in 'The Scream' is formed by his anxiety-filled mood.

Scream was first sketched in pastel colors on a piece of cardboard, a composition that evolved from his previous and similar work, titled *despair* (figure 6). From the 1880s, melancholy and fear was a major theme in Munch's output.



Figure 6: Despair (1892)

It is clear to the viewer of these two art works that Munch expresses the development of panic taking place from *despair* to *the scream*. The state of fear and panic that can afflict humankind is perfectly captured in the transition between these two compositions.

These works are strongly allied with Expressionism, the strong use of colour, distorted figures, and capturing an emotion are staples of expressionist work. The Scream became an icon expressing anxiety and loneliness: feelings of modern people (Bischoff, 2016).

Dia Al-Azzawi

Expressionism is not only confined to European creatives, it is far reaching, for example, its elements are also incorporated by Middle Eastern artists. The artist Dia Al-Azzawi, one of the founders of the *Baghdad Group for Modern Art*, the *New Vision group* and many other movements is one of the most groundbreaking and influential artists of his generation. His first works were characterised by the inspiration of popular cultural heritage.

In the seventies he depicted the massacre of Tel al-Za'tar and the massacres of Sabra and Shatila, shortly, I will focus on the former of these expressive works to give greater detail and understanding of his position.

Following this time, he moved to London and moved away from political life and focused his full attention on issues of aesthetic forms, where his interest shifted to shapes and color in a three-dimensional pattern. Following this Al-Azzawi then began to adopt Arabic letters in his art, becoming a pioneer and founder of the Hurufiyya movement alongside the pioneering Ibrahim Al-Salahi. Although this respite of depicting wars was short-lived, the invasion of Iraq in the Nineteen-nineties led to Dia's work once again becoming political. During this period he composed *The land of Blackness*, which I will also focus on (Kholeif, 2015).

Dia Al-Azzawi is considered one of the great Iraqi artists, an artistic career that spans more than five decades, whose art has been greatly influenced by his experiences, in particular, the numerous wars Iraq went through (Smith, 2016).

Al-Azzawi made a series of forty drawings depicting the massacre of Tel Zaatar as a form of memory, inspired by Mahmoud Darwish's poems that detail the horrors of the Palestinian refugee massacre. He titled this catalogue of drawings *the body's anthem*.

Although these drawings depict the cruelty of the massacre, Al-Azzawi did not intend for it to be interpreted as memories of violence and oppression. Instead, he wished to capture a memory of steadfastness in the face of adversity with this catalogue. In Al-Azzawi's own words he states about this catalogue: "they are an expression that attempts to create a free memory that persists against oppression..." (Al-Bahloly, 2013:71).



Figure 7: The Body's Anthem (1979)

One of the drawings (figure 7) depicts a human body whose intertwined and severed limbs are indistinguishable, showing signs of silent terror covered in blackness. It seems to me that when I look at this illustration, it is as if the eyes are staring either in terror or begging for mercy, and the texts that are on his face and fill the painting are the poems of poets that lament the people of the camp.



Figure 8: The Body's Anthem (1979)

In another illustration (figure 8), a woman is distinguishable, perhaps looking up and praying or looking up at the sky and screaming, or at the hands tied in front of her, perhaps it is her Son or Grandson. Her body overlaps with the horse's head as it neighs in pain, in arabic culture the Arabian horse is regarded as a source of pride. In this illustration however, it is as if it represents the vanquishment of the camp (Al-Bahloly, 2013).



Figure 9: The Land of Blackness (1993)

The *The Land of Blackness* (figure 9) includes a series of nine drawings of charcoal on paper depicting atmospheres saturated with black, and a series of sad weeping faces and open mouths, as if crying out to the viewer in sadness and terror. The hands sometimes cover the eyes and sometimes the mouths, and wiping away tears at other times. The interpretation of this work is found in its title, an antonym for '*The Land of fertility*', which is what Iraq is often described because of its richness in natural resources. However, it is more aptly described as *The Land of Blackness* because it has been plagued by constant turmoil and war (Didier Hess, 2019).

In both of these expressive works the artist completely omits any use of colour. They are bleak and oppressive. In *the body's anthem* the figures are especially distorted, the only recognisable features are severed limbs in a tangle of horror. And in *The Land of Blackness* for instance the artist has made the eyes disproportionately dark compared to the rest of the features. Al-Azzawi is successful in expressing emotions of horror and sadness in these works.

Abstract Expressionism

It is not necessary for the artist to draw the features of sadness and anger that appear on the subject. Artists can also embody their feelings through lines, colors and undefined shapes.

Half a century has passed since the beginning of this type of art in New York, when it was called the *New York School*. It is considered one of the most important modern trends that emerged after World War II in America.

Art witnessed a historical turning point from its dominance in the European continent to the American continent, and at that time it became one of the most popular and recent topics. It is based on the theory that colours, lines, and shapes, if used freely in an indefinite composition, are more capable of expressing the artist's feelings and able to delight the beholder.

Abstract art depends entirely on the artist's ability to imagine what he wants to paint. Among the prominent male artists who demonstrated Abstract Expressionism were Jackson Pollock, William de Kooning, Franz Klein and Mark Rothko. This movement was characterized by two main ways through the exploitation of colors. The artists focused on the irregular style of those colors and shapes (Auping, 1987).



Figure 10: Convergence (1952)

The first method described as 'action painting' is characterised by quick movements and brush strokes in an improvised way, such as dripping or pouring colors directly on the canvas. Jackson Pollock is famous for using this method, for example in his work *Convergence* (figure 10). A collage of colours is splattered on a canvas and the composition is free from all conventional forms of painting. The explosion of colours evokes a feeling full of energy. (Emmerling, 2003)

The second type is the approach of the artists Rothko, Newman, Reinhardt and Clifford Steel. These painters used large areas of flat, single color, alongside the translucent application of paint to create calm, meditative effects. Most of Rothko's work consisted of large groups of rectangular areas with soft edges and colours that seem to shimmer. (Anfam, Lewison, Ratcliff and Davidson, 2016)

The simplest way to convey how artists express emotion in Abstract Expressionism is to compare two of Rothko's works. Consider *Orange and Yellow* (figure 11) and contrast it with *No. 61* (figure 12), one feels warm and inviting, and the other cold and depressing. Both might be considered elementary and simple but they each express such different and poignant emotions.



Figure 11 (left): *Orange and Yellow* (1956)

Figure 12 (right): *No. 61* (1953)

Most of the artists adopted the principle of the complete distribution of the artwork equally, which gives the viewer the pleasure of looking freely at the entire work, rejecting the traditional principle that the artwork is in the center of the canvas, and then gradually disperses and almost disappears in the corners and edges.

Abstract art is one of the arts that has achieved a balance between the artist's mind and imagination in a way that moves away from traditional painting methodology. This balance exists between the artist's inner feeling and the abstract shapes he draws with his hand, passing through colors, consistency, contrast, texture, lines, and spaces, so the artistic process appears in balance, a complete harmony (Temkin, 2010).

Artists tend to objectivity in this type of art; this is to give the viewer the opportunity to interpret the work as he sees it from his own view, and it is worth noting that abstract art has become the main discussion in the field of modern art.

Following criticism from critics that abstract art does not require any artistic skills, the Russian abstract artist Wassily Kandinsky rebutted:

"Of all the arts, abstract painting is the most difficult...It demands that you know how to draw well, that you have a heightened sensitivity for composition and colors, and that you be a true poet. This last is essential" (Kandinsky and Lindsay, 1994).

Archil Gorky

The artist Archil Gorky is considered a central figure in the world of surrealism and abstract art, and can also be considered as one of the most prominent abstract expressionism artists. His sudden death came as a shock to American artists of his generation as he was one of the most loved artists (Cotter, 2017).

After witnessing the ethnic cleansing of his people in the year 1915 when he was a child, he was displaced with his mother and sisters from the Ottoman controlled Armenian village near Lake Van to nearby Russian territories (Gale, 2010).

In the year 1919, in the freezing cold, he witnessed the death of his mother from starvation, and in 1920 he emigrated with his sisters to America, both of whom were in their teens.



Figure 13 (left): The Artist and his Mother (ca. 1926 - 1936)

Figure 14 (right): Photo of Gorky with his mother (ca. 1910)

The suffering and loss he experienced in the genocide had a powerful influence on him that helped his development as an artist. In 1926 he plunged into work on the series *The Artist and His Mother* (figure 13), which he drew two versions of. This composition is based on a picture taken of him as a child with his mother (figure 14).

In these two works, It gives the impression that time has stopped and the characters seem to be immobile in a terrifying way. And to me, as if Gorky put all his feelings and the pain hidden within him in these two artworks. The transformations that these two paintings are witnessing are not just copies of an old picture, but on the contrary, it shows the artistic sense of this artist, which made it a piece of art with a certain aesthetic (Harris, 2004).

It was necessary for Gorky to confront the world in which he lived and in which he was supposed to develop, therefore, in his thirties his art began to develop from realism to surrealism and abstract expression.

At the beginning of his creative work, he was greatly influenced by the works of Paul Cézanne, Picasso, and Miró. Then he gradually developed his art to move to the side of Pollock and William de Kooning. He became a sign of the artist's admiration for the New York School of Modern Art. Gorky's works are full of emotion and feeling, and rich at the same time in enigmatic details.



Figure 15: Garden in Sochi (1941)

In his painting *Garden in Sochi* (figure 15), Gorky recalls his father's small garden near Lake Van, where there are apple trees and wild carrots. The painting is dominated by a khaki green color that covers almost the entire floor as if it represents the plants that envelop the garden. The other colors; viridian, green, lilacs, yellow, dark blue, and white are visible to the beholder of the painting. These colors all combine in the artist's imagination to represent carrots, apples, and possibly porcupine nests. The figures in the upper right corner look like tree branches flying in the wind. As for the left lower outlines, which are dominated by the dark blue and blackish color, as if they were organic, human shapes resembling breasts, Gorky depicted them to represent fertility and myths. Gorky described it in his writings:

"This garden was identified as the garden of Wish Fulfilment. Above all this stood an enormous tree all bleached under the sun, this was the holy tree. I had witnessed people, whoever pass by, that would voluntarily tear astrip of their clothes and attach this to the tree" (Gale, 2010).

With the added context to this abstract work one can realise that Gorky was trying to capture nostalgic and pleasant emotions. Perhaps the only positive emotions that the artist remembers from his tragic childhood.

The word 'Sochi' for the Armenians means the poplar tree, which has a special significance among the Armenians. They plant a poplar tree at the birth of each child, then the child's name and date of birth are carved on the tree.

These traditions and vows among the Armenians when the child was born remind me of some of the customs and traditions carried out by many Iraqi women who wish to have a child or a son from the revival of Zakaria night which falls on the first Sunday of March (Sha'ban). The custom involves lighting candles and putting sweets into Pottery bowls and children beating drums. Some of them even refrain from speaking, as the Prophet Zechariah did.

The customs and traditions of the rituals of the Night of Zakaria, inherited from a long time ago, go back to the story of the Prophet Zechariah, who God answered his supplication, and blessed him with a child from a barren wife, at the age of 90. So it became a tradition for women who did not have children, or who did not have male children. Or even to fulfill any other wish, hoping that God will respond to their wishes by reviving this night.

Conclusion

As a student of art researching expressive art and its impact, I found I could reach my goal of embodying feelings and emotions into my work by adding texture, bright and bold colours or even black and white hues to the subject's face and body.

Expressionist art targets feelings and emotions by intensifying and distorting forms. It is considered one of the arts that is most influenced by excessive subjectivity. Heavily employing the use of contrasting colours, distorted jagged lines, and quick brush strokes. Through these methods expressionist art is able to convey feelings charged with turbulent and anxious emotions as well as happiness, hope and strength.

Concerning abstract expressionism, it can be said that strong and thick gestural brushstrokes, layers of texture, and liberal use of colour all accumulate in making these artworks completely detached from any semblance of accurate representation yet still capture the distinct soul of the subject.

Arguably, abstract expressionism is better in expressing emotion through the creation of a mass of conflicting colors and quick brush strokes on the canvas than the slow suffering of depicting emotion on an excessively realistic piece.

This form of art questions the beholder: 'What emotion do you feel when you gaze upon this work?'. It is not important whether these feelings are negative or positive, it is important for the abstract expressionist art to have an emotional effect on the viewer, and to draw the viewer into this world and keep them occupied in probing its depths and ambiguities for a long time.

There are no limits to how these forms of art styles express emotion.

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