

Three Key Words Proposal: Aesthetic, Interaction, Movement

Student Number: 1900934

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Tutor's Name: Donna Williams

I will be investigating and evaluating these three key words in which I will further explore next year. The key words I have chosen to represent what I would like to research and create an influence from are aesthetic, interaction and movement. They all seem to have a very broad range of knowledge so in this essay, I will be looking for specific information to help myself gain a better understanding of what I would like to produce in the future.

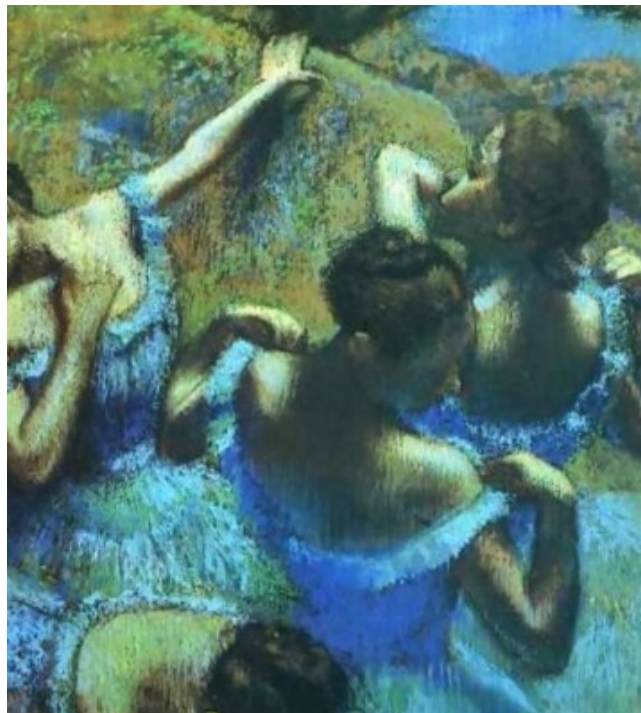


Figure 1: A screenshot of Blue Dancers, 1899 by Edgar Degas

The first word I have chosen to analyse is aesthetic, the physical appearance of an object. The presentation of an entity is the first element an audience would see when they see anything from a billboard/poster on the street to a painting in an art gallery and would in turn form an opinion based on how it looks alone before knowing it's context. This can often be seen as judgemental as some objects may hide a deeper or more complex message behind its piece that would be disregarded by the public especially if they form a strong

view against the work visually. On the other hand, if a piece of artwork is visually interesting or creative to the viewer, it may allow them to look more closely at the object to find out why it was produced and in result, it may allow the audience to connect more to the piece. James Paul Gee wrote the article *Video Games, Design and Aesthetic Experience* and explains how artwork can carry a deeper and more emotional responses from its audiences. 'The design of a work of art involves not just the design of an object (e.g., a painting) or performance (e.g., dance). It involves also the design of an experience a person can have with the object or performance.' (James Paul Gee, 2016.) This quote suggests that when a piece of work is viewed to somebody who has never seen it before, they can get a more open view on what they believe that piece is about. Whether it is a product of creativity or performance, the audience can relate more personally to a piece if the work includes objects that can trigger memories from their past allowing them to believe that they feel included especially if the piece has a strong and motivating message that viewers can feel they are seen or heard when looking at the object. This would affect the way a person may see this and look at the object at a different perspective therefore creating multiple ways in which they can observe and evaluate a piece just by looking into it. It creates an experience in which the viewer would look back on this memory and every time they would see or remember it, they would reflect on how it made them feel during the first moment they saw it and may even trigger new emotions and feelings depending on how much time had passed since the person saw the piece or if they are seeing it through another lens/different angle.

Figure 1 is a screenshot of the painting *Blue Dancers*, created in 1899 by artist Edgar Degas which shows dancers dressed in blue costumes performing. In this painting, several cooler undertones including dark greens and blues creating a calm and relaxed effect and the figures are postured elegantly relating to the beauty and grace of ballet dancers, a big contrast to the vigorous and stressful routine and environment of a ballet dancer. It can also perhaps indicate that the setting is of a final performance rather than a rehearsal practice because of the structured and perfected stance of the performers. The expressions shown are of focus and confidence (bowing of head could be shyness/nervousness) which can also indicate that this is for an important performance. Degas has created various points of highlight and shadow to show where the spotlight would shine on the performers with whites shown where more body is exposed to light and shadows on the lower half or more facing towards us as an audience hidden from light indicating the source beaming from a higher angle giving the painting a more realistic finish.

An aesthetic towards a piece of art can always be seen as controversial. Everybody viewing the artwork is going to have a different opinion about it as we are all unique individuals who have been brought up in different backgrounds and societies. However, Europe was one of

the first places to connect the creative and performing arts together in one piece. An article called *THE DANCING SCULPTURES OF THE 19TH CENTURY EUROPEAN ART* suggested that the 19th century had ‘an interesting period in European art because of its witnessing of long term styles like Neoclassicism and Romanticism’ (Sibel ALMELEK ISMAN, 2015.). Neoclassicism was used in western art predominantly through this century celebrating the visual arts including the creative and performing and Romanticism carried a more emotional value toward s a piece involving its viewer into something they can relate to and share their experience with. These art styles impacted this era as they told a story, whether it was fictitious or about a period of history, they informed and entertained people. Both these movements impacted society and up to today continues to influence other artists to create pieces of work that associate the creative and performing arts together using colours, textures, figures, objects to show emotions and feelings to reflect onto their audiences.



Figure 2: A screenshot of *The Pan Pan at the Monico*, 1959 by Gino Severini

The second word I have chosen is interaction. To interact in something is to be involved in the outcome and can change anything from using the smallest of actions. I have mentioned previously that whilst a piece of artwork can give its audience emotional impact therefore making them feel more involved in the piece, it is rare that a piece can be influenced by physical impact from the viewer witnessing. However, artist Gino Severini tested this theory and produced a piece of art called *The Pan Pan at the Monico* (Figure 2). In the article *From Figuration to Abstraction*, Cristina Santarelli describes the music in the artwork by Severini as a ‘dynamic effect created by the decomposition of the forms into series of flat coloured tiles is multiplied by the continuous zigzag of profiles and a perspective method that

suddenly moves the points of view farther away and then closer' (Cristina Santarelli, 2014.). This indicates that Severini used many layers of texture to create the illusion that the image is moving which is a clever, playful, and contemporary way to interact with the audience. It is three dimensional creates more layers therefore more story to the piece especially if the viewer were to look at this piece from another aspect. Severini has used bright colours to match the upbeat and charismatic nature of the painting which including the pretence of the figures 'moving' in the image persuade the audience to feel more joy and happiness within this piece.

This small involvement from audiences can create a ripple effect and influence more people to join in with their experience, creating a wider and more diverse community. An example of a product that helps connect more people together is video games with their purpose to entertain. Video games compare differently to other sources of entertainment including books, films, plays etc. as they allow the audience choice during the events of a story rather than having a fixed plot that invites the audience to follow along. Interactive video games such as Dance Dance Revolution and Dance Central achieve that as well combining music and performance to provide even more fun and entertainment for their audiences. These games are suitable for everyone as they contain a wide range of music genres and performance levels from beginners to experts. The article, *Energy Expenditure and Intensity of Interactive Video Dance Games according to Health Recommendations* talks about this in video game Dance Central where they created an experiment with women and concluded that 'Dance Central on the difficulty of „Easy“ by women without experience in this area is characterized by a moderate intensity of physical effort.' (Jacek Polechoński et al., 2018.). This proposes that 'easy' levels don't require much experience which may make it simpler for the audience (which are women in this example) to complete each dance without too much physical activity. This may propel them to want to accomplish more routines and therefore gain more skill in the activity as well as the enjoyment to want to do it again and again. This may become more challenging for the women however if they practice hard and try the more complicated routines, there could be a possibility they would start to get better at the game and start to get in the rhythm and have fun. This interaction can also help them to recommend this to other people and persuading them to get more involved not only to create a shared interest but to build a bigger and divergent community.



Figure 3: A screenshot of Chrysanthemums by painter Leonard Aitken

The third and final word I have chosen is movement. This is such a broad term as we move all the time, sometimes without realising. When we breathe, our chest moves up and down, when we blink, our eyes flutter open and close even without us thinking about it. Our world is constantly moving, ever evolving into something bigger. Our advancement in technology is growing every day and nature never has a moment to stop growing, blossoming into something beautiful. Figure 3 shows a screenshot of a painting named *Chrysanthemums* by Leonard Aitken showing flowers flourishing. The variety of flowers depicted in the picture indicates how different each plant is and how much we underappreciate the importance of our natural environment, it is all around us and like ourselves we should also be looking after the planet we are living in no matter how unique or rare each flower, plant or tree is. The colour palettes of mainly greens and yellow brings a vibrancy to the painting and represents nature and its environment. Green and yellows are associated with positivity and I believe Aitken tried to bring that into his artwork.

Another reason why I chose the word movement was because of its relevance to physical activity and wellbeing. It is vitally important that we look after ourselves especially when it comes to our physical, mental, and emotional health and this is an element I would like to research further upon and how I can link this with interactive video games, *Wii Sports* bring a perfect example. A study conducted for the article *Activity-promoting gaming systems in exercise and rehabilitation* has stated that one of the sports games they include 'Wii Boxing appears to be the most beneficial game for EE because of the vigorous nature of the game and the need to use both arms for gameplay.' (Taylor, Matthew J D et al., 2011.) They also state that 'These games are primarily a form of entertainment that may help with motivation (which is important for rehabilitation). Some form of activity is perhaps better than none, and playing the more active games could counter the effects of a sedentary lifestyle.' (Taylor, Matthew J D et al., 2011.) EE also known as "energy

expenditure,” (Taylor, Matthew J D et al., 2011.) may be defined as how much energy a person uses whilst playing a game in this experiment, the more challenging or physical the activity, the more energy is being used and the more tired they are after exercise. This boxing game came with the best set of results as it allowed the people to work with more movement in their body from their upper body such as their shoulders, arms and upper back to the mid torso and abdomen area to their legs and feet creating a full body workout. The more we move especially if it either fast or slowly and consistency e.g. 100m race or marathon, the quicker we will become exhausted particularly if you never trained or practiced any techniques or skills to perfect the activity (which is also why training is very important and beneficial to many athletes in the real world). These quotes also suggest that nobody should take these physical activities seriously as they are part of a source of entertainment where the goal is to have fun playing these games. This can help the audience relax a little whilst playing as they would not see it as any type of contest to try and beat the other players etc allowing them to enjoy what they achieve during the process and therefore more determined to do the activity again and again. Of course, some form of physical activity whether it is simply dancing around in your living room or playing imaginary tennis may seem a bit frivolous however it is still a form of exercise that can help you to achieve a better and healthier lifestyle whilst having some fun along the way.

There can also be a chance where injuries can occur if the activity was not practised properly or there was little to no stretching beforehand (can lead to torn muscles and ligaments). The article *Activity-promoting gaming systems in exercise and rehabilitation* states ‘a number of accidents while playing DDR (the majority caused by playing for too long) resulted in injuries ranging from cuts and bruises to sprains and broken bones.’ ‘the injuries reported for DDR were also a consequence of excessive play and poor technique.’ ‘these games may not elicit the same fatiguing response as the actual sport’ (Taylor, Matthew J D et al., 2011.). All these quotes strongly suggest about the importance of taking a rest or a break in between or after workouts. As well as keeping yourself always hydrated during exercise, rest is just as valuable as it allows the body to breathe especially after vigorous and tiring physical activities. As I mentioned previously not taking exercise into serious consideration particularly if its something you do regularly can be extremely bad to your health as you would be more prone to getting various injuries. I am not surprised that the result of injuries in these games have been less severe than those of actual sportspeople as these are a set of enjoyable activities however it is still vital that you must be aware of your surroundings and consciousness when playing because even though it is supposed to be fun and games, accidents can happen all the time if you lose focus. A simple 5 minute stretch and warm up before any form of physical exercise will help to release tension in muscles and invigorate your body ready for a workout.

After researching and analysing these sources, I have chosen to investigate how dance and digital graphic design affects our community and our mental health and wellbeing. This can involve all age groups including children, teens, adults, or the elderly and can help to explore how the creative and performing arts can come together to connect us all.

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Figures

Figure 1:

Edgar Degas. Blue Dancers, c.1899. [ONLINE] Available at <https://www.edgar-degas.org/Blue-Dancers-C.1899.html>. [Accessed 12 May 2021].

Figure 2:

Severini, Gino. (1959). The Pan Pan at the Monico, 1959 (oil on canvas).

Figure 3:

Leonard Aitken. 2012. Botanical Paintings. [ONLINE] Available at:
<https://leonardaitken.com/botanical-paintings/>. [Accessed 12 May 2021].