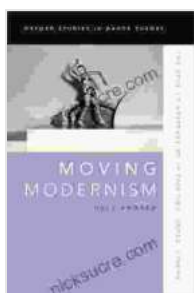


The Urge to Abstraction in Painting, Dance, and Cinema: Oxford Studies in Dance Theory

Throughout the history of art, creators in various disciplines have demonstrated a compelling drive to explore abstraction as a means of expressing themselves. This phenomenon has manifested itself in painting, dance, and cinema, where artists have sought to transcend the limitations of representation and delve into the realm of pure form, color, and movement. This article explores the shared impulses and motivations behind this urge to abstraction in different artistic mediums.

Abstraction in Painting

In painting, abstraction has a long and storied history. From the early 20th century onward, artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, and Jackson Pollock began to move away from traditional modes of representation, embracing instead the exploration of color, line, and texture as independent elements. This shift was driven by a desire to escape the constraints of the physical world and to express inner thoughts and emotions in a more direct and universal manner.



Moving Modernism: The Urge to Abstraction in Painting, Dance, Cinema (Oxford Studies in Dance Theory) by Louise Steinman

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Abstraction in Dance

The urge to abstraction has also been a significant force in the development of dance. In the early decades of the 20th century, choreographers such as Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham began to question the traditional ballet vocabulary and to experiment with new ways of moving the body. They sought to create dances that were less about narrative or spectacle and more about the exploration of pure movement and the expression of inner emotions.



Abstract dance performance by Martha Graham

Abstraction in Cinema

In cinema, abstraction has emerged as a powerful tool for filmmakers seeking to explore new ways of storytelling and engaging with audiences. Films like "Un Chien Andalou" (1929) by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí and "Meshes of the Afternoon" (1943) by Maya Deren and Alexander Hammid utilized surrealistic imagery, dreamlike sequences, and unconventional editing techniques to create abstract cinematic experiences that challenged traditional notions of narrative and representation.



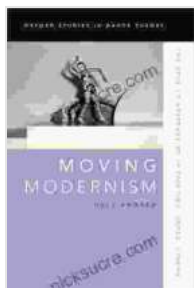
Shared Motivations and Impulses

Despite the differences in their respective mediums, the urge to abstraction in painting, dance, and cinema is driven by a number of shared motivations and impulses:

- **The desire to transcend representation and explore pure form, color, and movement:** Artists in all three disciplines have sought to escape the constraints of the physical world and to express themselves in a more direct and universal manner.
- **The pursuit of inner expression and the exploration of subjective emotions:** Abstraction allows artists to tap into their inner thoughts and emotions and to communicate them non-verbally to audiences.
- **The search for new and innovative ways of storytelling and communication:** Artists have embraced abstraction as a means of challenging traditional modes of expression and to explore new ways of engaging with audiences.
- **A belief in the power of non-representational art:** Artists have recognized that abstraction can convey complex ideas and emotions in a way that is not possible through representational means.

The urge to abstraction in painting, dance, and cinema is a testament to the inherent human desire to explore new and innovative forms of expression. By transcending the limitations of representation, artists in these disciplines have been able to delve into the realm of pure form, color, and movement, thereby opening up new possibilities for storytelling and emotional expression. The enduring appeal of abstraction in these mediums

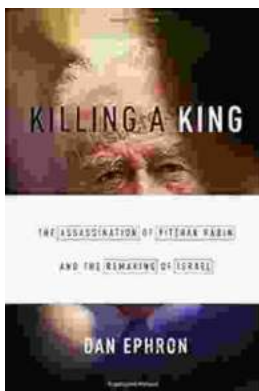
demonstrates its power to engage audiences, challenge conventions, and inspire creativity.



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