

Dr. Husby

Views and Visions: 19th Century American Landscape Painting

Text Panels from Class Presentation

Art- Art is a visual communication, a statement using a learned visual language whose goal is the sharing of information, expression and/or inspiration through primarily visual means.

All works of art have a subject and a meaning:

Subject= what we see

Meaning- a product of the interaction of the artist's intention and the viewer's interpretation.

Art History attempts to find out what the artist's original intention was, how the artist's work was originally interpreted and how that meaning may have changed.

Methodologies of Art Historical Inquiry- The "ABCs" of Inquiry

1. **Analysis-** Inquiry into HOW a work is created using the FORMAL ELEMENTS of art: line, color, shape, texture and composition.

2. **Biography-** Inquiry into WHO created the work by taking seriously the idea of authorship.

3. **Context-** Interdisciplinary inquiry that considers how the work reflects the culture in which it was created.

Romanticism- a "mode of feeling" that arose during the latter part of the 18th C. and early part of the 19th C., which validates emotional experience and the artistic imagination. It is less a matter of style than a broad cultural attitude.

Shared Thematic Concerns of the Hudson River School:

*Belief in a nature based religion

*The Ideology of "Truth to Nature"

* Significance of the untamed wilderness as reflection our national character

Formal Characteristics of the Hudson River School:

*Panoramic views encompassing varied scenery

*Faithful rendering of details but landscapes are composed from sketches

*Light filled atmospheric effects

Formal Characteristics of Luminism:

*Emphasis on effects of light

*Smooth, invisible brushstrokes

*Low horizon

*Sense of stillness and silence

The Age of Cosmopolitanism AKA "The Gilded Age" 1875-1900

*The Incorporation of America

*Greater diversity in artistic styles:

- *Native Realism
- *Tonalism – 1880 to 1915
- *Impressionism -1880 to 1915

Three Major Influences on American Artists Studying Abroad:

1. French Barbizon School
2. Aestheticism
3. "Plein-aire" painting

Tonalism 1885-1915

"Poet Painters" turn away from an emphasis on the material reality of nature toward the subjective experience of nature

Formal Characteristics:

1. Fragmentary bits of nature painted "en plein-aire"
2. Harmonious modulation of color to produce a unified effect or mood of nature rather than a description of natural forms

Impressionism 1885-1915

*Spontaneity of scenes of modern life

*Interest in the effects of light on color

*"En plein-aire" painting

*High-keyed palette of complimentary colors placed side by side in short, homogeneous brushstrokes