

Jideofor Ojukwu

11/16/2013

## THE BUILDER

Fernand leger painting of the builders to me represented the common man in a developing time period. The geometric shapes and colors make a noticeable contrast. What does it mean? Well it was in many ways a visual representation of the internal struggle within a certain society. He clearly portrayed people working in an abstract form and he created it from a multitude of viewpoints. This is how most Cubist makes art in order to add greater context to their work. People who look at Cubist complex artworks are advised to try to expand their thinking and view on the topic of artwork. The abstract forms created from a complex angle of views have to make one think what else the picture is trying to portray to its audience. It moves your mind along so many different paths and it challenges you to see the big picture all at the same time. The Cubist art work emphasizes the flat, two-dimensional surface of the pictures plane to grab the on lookers. They move away from any traditional techniques such as perspective, modeling, and foreshortening. Cubist never restricted by copy form, texture, space, and color. Instead they broke those foundations and presented in their paintings radical fragmented objects, whose varies sides were seen simultaneously.

There was a period between 1910 to 1912 that was referred to as the time of Analytically Cubism or simply the early beginnings and stages of cubism. The paintings done during this era portrayed the breaking down, or analysis, of form. The right-angle and straight-line constructions were most desired, but sometimes there were some areas of certain paintings

that appeared to be sculptural. The painting Picasso made called "Girl with a Mandolin"(1910) was a perfect example of how Cubist did this. Color schemes were monochromatic and that consisted of hues of tan, brown, gray, green, and blue. The reason the colors weren't vibrant was to avoid distracting viewers from the artist primary interest, which was always the structure of form itself. The big picture was always the main point for Cubist when they created their art pieces. The monochromatic colors also aided the complex and varying views of the object, which was deduced to overlapping opaque and transparent planes. These specific planes appear to raise over the surface the canvas rather than sink into its depth. Forms must generally be compact and dense in the center of the Analytic Cubist paintings, and gradually grow larger as they fade towards the edges of the canvas.

Fernand Leger was working in Paris during the height of cubism, and his unique and iconic style. Leger had a long fifty year career and did many things in that time. He put great emphasis on primary colors and rounded massive forms. In fact his special art style has become informally regarded "Tubism". His most abstract pieces of art are easier to analyze than the works of great artist like Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. Leger in some ways was also a Futurist painter who enjoyed creating works of art that involved some form of industry and machines. It was a clear reflection of how he loved to look ahead and make progress. However, he would retain his classic style going back to more traditional forms of painting like landscape, female nude, and still life. Leger also contributed to other forms of art like ceramic, large-scale murals, film, theater, dance sets, glass work, and book art. His style always varied never being confounded to one form or style. Leger favored using primary colors and was constantly graphic. He loved depicting humans or odd geometric shapes to convey with the very flow of

daily life. Leger always appreciated the Cubist notion of releasing the painter from the chains of realism. Ironically Leger was still more infatuated with materialism much more than other Cubist such as the famous Braque and Picasso.

The builders painting share the true Cubist motif of painting and creating a not-figurative realism. However, it shifts from the Montmartre artist by avoiding a less intellectual aspect, but a more visual one. It doesn't show a totality of the portrayed object, but distinguishes each specific object in volume and plan within the ideal space. Its formation was referred to by Louis Vauxcelles, the "tubisme". The geometrical shapes were not stationary, but autonomous, and they created a dynamic antagonism between themselves. However, one must not forget after all the deep analyzing that this was just one of Leger's works centered on the common man. It was a portrayal of ordinary people, which happened to be construction workers in this specific art piece.

This was a clear reflection on Leger's political interest in the working classes within society, and uses flat colors and thick contours to portray that. Leger shifted away from abstraction after the First World War, and started show his appreciation from the little things. Leger claimed to have found the true beauty of common objects, which he described were 'everyday poetic images'. His paintings were clean and very meticulous, and it would define the most common of objects in bold colors. As a futurist it was also not uncommon to bits and pieces of machinery and whole city as a part of his subject matter.

Fernand Leger once stated, "The realistic value of a work is completely independent of its properties in terms of content." This statement alone summarizes the important aspects of the foundation of Cubism. However, it applies to many other forms of art and they way they are created. Art is very complex in its forms and pulls from levels from our creative minds. The formation of Art comes in various forms such as nature, sculpture, photography, painting, dancing,

and so much more. Cubism represents a true fusion of abstract art forms combined with simple objects and representations. A man by the name of George Jean Nathan once said, "Great art is irrational as great music. It is mad with its own loveliness." Art is a magnificent form of expression that speaks volumes as its complexity runs deep through senses. The way we see it and interpret it into our minds will always spark an opinion whether it is internal or external. Art is a reflection on our lives and of the individual soul who created it. Cubism is an interpretation of life its and the internal struggles that come with. This was the very basis on which Fernand Leger's painting of the builders was shaped from. It is so simple yet so deep at the same time, and it is when art captures such a duality that it sparks imagination into the viewer. It makes you think and focus on the bigger picture from the many aspects presented to you. In a way Cubism encourages the viewer to paint their own mental picture of the real truth that is being spoken.

Sources:

n.a(n.d)BrainyQuotes.(11/18/2013)from[http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/great\\_art.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/great_art.html)

n.a(n.d)HeilbrunnTimelineofArtHistory(11/18/2013)from[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd\\_cube.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd_cube.htm)

n.a(n.d)The Archive(11/18/2013)from <http://www.artchive.com/artchive/L/leger.html>

n.a(n.d)Flickr(11/18/2013)from <http://www.flickr.com/photos/32357038@N08/3214235253/>