

## Art And Design Expressive Essay1.

Discuss the work of two still life painters from different periods, referring to specific examples of their work.

Many painters over the years have created stunning works of art which come under the wide term of 'still life'. Subject matter for this type of Art varies from flowers to cats and teapots. Different artists approach this type of art using very different techniques, media and varied use of colour. There are specific movements related to still life. These are, Impressionism, Neo Impressionism and post Impressionism. The colourists are another movement also related to still life.

Post Impressionism is the term applied to various trends in painting, particularly in France. Post impressionism developed from Impressionism or as a reaction against it approximately in the period from 1880-1905. Impressionism was a movement which originated in the 1860's in France. The impressionists desire to look at the world with a new freshness and immediacy was encouraged by photography and scientific research into colour and light. Impressionists tried to capture the effects of light on varied surfaces. They transformed conventional styles by using sketchy brushwork and bright colours. Artists who are considered to be the key artists involved in the Post impressionism movement are Cezanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh.

The ways in which Post impressionism artists reflected some of the features of impressionism varied greatly. For eg. Seurat concentrated on a more scientific analysis of colour, Gauguin explored a symbolic use of colour and Van Gogh was very expressive in his work. Cezanne once said that he wished 'to make of impressionism something solid and enduring' He was also interested in pictorial structure.

The artist Paul Cezanne was associated with the movement of post impressionism. Paul Cezanne was born in 1839 in Aix-en-Provence, he died in 1906. Cezanne originally studied law and worked in the family bank. He then moved to Paris to become an artist, after his friend Emile Zola introduced him to Manet and Courbet and persuaded him to take up the study of art in Paris. Cezanne's father was very well off as he was a prosperous banker, so Cezanne was financially secure even though his new line of work did not allow him to make a great deal of money in the beginning. Cezanne had a reputation of being a bit eccentric and it took him a long time to fully master his medium. However he emerged as one of the greatest artists of his time.

Through contact with the Impressionists, Cezanne began to paint nature and gradually developed a completely new style, which established him as the 'father of modern art'. From about 1870 Cezanne started painting directly from nature. He exhibited his work along with the other Impressionists in 1873 and also in 1877, but was not entirely like the other impressionists as he did not necessarily use their type of techniques and his aims were not similar. Cezanne was not so interested in realistic representation and the effects of light and was more interested in the structural analysis of nature, looking forward in this respect to neo-impressionists. He adapted the distinctly blocky dash-like strokes which broke up forms in Impressionist paintings and used them to construct form. In the 1870's these shaped became a repeated patterns of regular oblongs of paint, which gave solidity to the forms in the picture.

As the artist's personal style blossomed, he became determined that the style of two-dimensional painting should not be disregarded. He was not interested in painting realistically and called his paintings 'constructions after nature' in which essential elements from the three dimensional world were reassembled on flat canvass. He experimented with lots of things such as overlapping patches of paint to suggest that one object was in front of the other, he also depicted objects from several angles at once. He also exploited the fact that warm colours usually seem to come forward in a painting while colder colours tend to recede. Also instead of modelling his subjects with light and shade he modulated form with colour. He developed these techniques slowly. He would often work on a painting for months or years. He did not paint in sections but each time he would address the entire canvas simultaneously and would build up the painting gradually.

Cezanne's later paintings from the 1880's onwards were much more controlled than his earlier paintings. In these later paintings the paint became thinner, his colours richer, and rigidly regular strokes of paint became loosely painted patches of colour, often beside patches of bare canvas. It was a very new and original way of painting which laid the foundations for the major art movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century from Cubism to Abstract art.

Still life painting had been extremely popular during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (especially in Holland) but it had declined by the 19<sup>th</sup> century but Cezanne renewed its status at this time. However he made no attempt to create a realistic representation of the subjects he painted and instead he concentrated on colour and composition. His simple objects with their stark geometry inspired Picasso's early cubist still life's.

'Cherries and Peaches' is a piece of art by Cezanne. This still life depicts some of the styles he experimented with such as the representation of objects from a number of angles. In this painting the perspective of the picture is altered as the plate of cherries is shown from a different angle to the other objects. Which creates a very original view of the objects as a whole and makes the painting unique and interesting. The contrast of the lighter objects against the dull background also creates a dramatic effect and this leads your eye to be drawn to the cherries and the peaches. The jug is also quite dark in colour and so the contrast is emphasised creating a further exaggeration of the cherries and the peaches. The white plates with the cherries and peaches and also the white cloth is positioned in such a way that allows your eye to be drawn into the painting. Below is an annotated diagram of this painting.

Another movement associated with still life is The colourist movement. Key Scottish colourists are F.C.B. Cadell, J.D. Ferguson, S.J. Peploe and G. Leslie Hunter. They were four Scottish artists who worked at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At different times these painters worked in France, along with some of the most famous artists at the school of Paris. The colourists were recognised in France and Scotland but they were not known in London and other places for some time. In the 1880's a group of young Scots painters, the 'Glasgow Boys', discovered the workshop system of training in Paris and the wealth of new work to be seen there. The colourists admired the Glasgow Boys. They were influenced by the latest Fauve and Cubist works and brought back to Scotland the first modern painting to be seen in Britain. Fauvism was a movement in art renowned for its use of bright colours. Cubism was a movement in art developed by the artists Picasso and Braque and is known for the many angles in which the subject is painted from.

The colourists' strong use of colour and fluent style of brushwork and use of pattern made their paintings unique and new; nothing like this had been seen in Britain before 1914. The colourists finally exhibited in a group in 1923 in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Paris.

Of the four colourists Peploe was the first and Predominant member to emerge as an artist with an independent style. Peploe trained briefly in Edinburgh and then in Paris in 1894. Peploe's early still life works were characterised by dark tones and limited colours and with strong and fluent brushwork. When he was in Paris as a student in 1894 Peploe had been impressed by Manet's work and he was greatly influenced by it, this influence is evident in the still life 'Coffee and Liqueur' done in 1898.

Peploe came from a middle class home and had been left money but he still had to sell his paintings in order to survive. Peploe was the only one out of the four Scottish colourists who left his sons and wife with enough money to live comfortably after his death. However later on Peploe's popularity grew and in 1988 his painting 'The girl in White' was sold for £500 000, making it one of the most expensive 20<sup>th</sup> century British works of art.

Peploe's work is distinctive and recognisable due to its strong use of colour, fluent brushwork and keen sense of pattern. Below is a still life done by Peploe called 'Still Life with Roses'. In this painting the brush strokes are visible and in some areas are more bold than others. The predominant colours are blue and orange which are complementary colours. I personally really like this still life. It is very bold and the heavy use of colour makes it very original. Also the positive contrast of the two main colours, orange and blue, makes the painting attractive to the eye at first glance and as you look closer the detail and composition draws your eye in.

In conclusion, it is evident that both S.J. Peploe and Paul Cezanne were talented and unique painters. Their styles were very different and their influences also varied. Cezanne was associated with post Impressionism and Peploe was involved in the colourists movement and this origin is evident in the painters style. Their use of colour and brushwork is also contrasting. However, although Peploe and Cezanne had different aims they both created very expressive works of art with interesting and bold compositions and original use of media.

