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# Art-A Reflection of Self

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## Abstract

Art changes from time to time. The meaning of art must change. Art must go on. The benefit of art must be understood. Art can be used in many ways. We need to change our mindset to bring art into our daily lives. We have to broaden our thinking. Every problem, whether it is mental or it is physical, can be solved through art. Art is the solution for living a better life and a peaceful life. Art can be used as therapy, as treatment and as medicine. Art can be used as a healing tool for mental patients. Art heals.

**Key Words:** Creativity, Imitation, Intuition, Expression, Peace

## Introduction

If we want to see the development of Art, then we need to start from Cave Paintings. We all know and feel that Cave Paintings are the best examples of Creativity. People from the beginning wanted to express themselves. Expressing our thoughts, feeling, ideas is a natural tendency. We all want to express. We all have a lot to share. We want to communicate with others. It is our natural wish, it is our natural urge and it is our natural need. But how?

Drawing and Painting is one of the best medium to express our thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences. It is one of the best tools to express our emotions. But how? Actually the point is that we all cannot be good at speaking, we all cannot be good at expressing our feelings, our emotions, our thoughts verbally. We all have a lot to say, but we cannot speak properly. We cannot arrange words properly. What to do? This is a problem. This is a very genuine problem. We need to understand this. There are many people who are facing this problem. For them, **Drawing and Painting is the solution.**

We are human being. We are surrounded by nature. **"Nature is our best teacher."** said William Wordsworth. We love nature. We want to be with nature. We observe nature and try to copy them through drawing and painting. It is natural. It comes

automatically. We don't plan to do it. From the very beginning, people thought that art means 'Imitation'. Art means imitating something from nature. Even a famous Greek Philosopher Aristotle's theory supported this idea. **Aristotle says, "Art Imitates Nature"**. Imitation was the central idea of art. So artists of all kinds started imitating nature to create a beautiful piece of art work.

Nature is beautiful. So art should be beautiful. Nature is always accurate and perfect, so art should be accurate and perfect. Nature means Beauty, art also means Beauty. Nature gives life, art also gives life. Nature teaches a lot of things to human being. Nature is a great teacher. In the same way art teaches people how to live. Art teaches people how to make a living. Art develops people's Aesthetic Sense. So from the beginning there is a good relationship between Nature and Art.

It was a thought that art means Beautiful Landscape, art means Beautiful Portrait, and art means Beautiful Composition, Beautiful Nude, Beautiful Human Figure, Realistic and Perfect Drawing. Above all, art means Beauty. Art reflects Beauty. Even art is Beauty whether it is painting, sculpture, music, architecture and so on.

Now, this was the meaning of art till Ninetieth Century, means till Impressionism. After Impressionism, means end of nineteenth century; there was a great change in painting. It was totally a different perspective. Vincent Van Gogh, Dutch Painter, Post-Impressionist artist brought that change. Edvard Munch, Norwegian Painter brought that change. They made different types of painting. They changed the traditional way of thinking and making painting. They had shown us a new way of expressing ideas; they had shown us a new way of creating paintings.

The meaning of art had changed. The whole perspective of making painting had changed. It is not imitating nature. It is not showing beautiful landscape, beautiful portrait, beautiful composition, beautiful nude, beautiful human figure and realistic drawing. It is a different one.

Now art means Expression. "Art means Intuition. Art means expressing one's feelings, one's emotions and one's ideas. Art means presenting oneself. Art does not mean to imitate nature. Art does not mean to show beauty only. Art is a reflection of "Self".

Here creativity plays a very important role. Creativity is the fundamental to all academic disciplines and educational activities, not just the arts. We need to understand that creativity is an active process. It is a learning habit that requires skill as well as specific understanding of the contexts in which creativity is being applied.

Most of the people think that Creativity is a gift, creativity is a talent. And very few people have this gift and talent. Even many of us think that God gives us this mystical gift and God

gives us this extra ordinary talent. And we all believe in this and we work accordingly. But this is not the truth.

The truth is that **creativity is not just a gift, creativity is not a talent**. And God does not give this gift and talent to special people. God does not give this exceptional quality to exceptional people. God gives this quality to everyone.

But we all need to understand that **Creativity is a skill, creativity is something that can be developed and creativity is something that can be exercised, practised, improved and learnt**. And if we want to develop our creativity, **we first have to understand what creativity means**.

Now, situation has changed. Things have changed. People have changed. Society has changed a lot. Now, in society there is fear, there is anger, there is anxiety, there is depression and frustration. People did have problems. People have difficulties. People have challenges. That is why people are asking for help; people are asking for happiness, people are asking for beauty. In this situation, art has a different meaning. Art is no more beauty. Art is no more expressing beautiful portrait or expressing beautiful landscape. Now Art is Expression. Art is expressing oneself. It is Self-Expression. It is expressing one's feelings, emotions and ideas. This is Expressionism.

Expressionism was a movement of the art. It happened in Germany. It was the most emotional and subjective art movement. In this movement the artists were more closely attached by temperament than by style. They wanted to express feeling through the distortion of line and colour.

These artists wanted to paint about emotion. It could be anger, anxiety fear or peacefulness. Their art reflects the possibility of a new and better society. This idea was not new. This was an old idea, but we did not know the term "Expressionism". Different artists did the same thing. Vincent Van Gogh used this idea. Munch used this idea.

Expressionist art tried to convey emotion and meaning rather than reality. Each artist had their own unique way of "expressing" their emotions in their art. In order to express emotion, the subjects are often distorted or exaggerated. At the same time colors are often vivid and shocking.

**Benedetto Croce**, an Italian philosopher, critic and educator stated, "- the question as to what is art, - I will say at once, in the simplest manner, that **art is vision or intuition**". According to Croce, Art is intuition. That means art is internal. Art is inside. Art is subjective. Art is within. Art is not outside. Art is not external. Art is not imitation. Art is not copying things from nature. Art means observing things and understanding them and creating something new.

## **“The true artistic expression is never anything physical” – Croce**

According to Croce, true art is not physical. True art is not external. According to him, the process of creating something new is internal. The process of inventing something new is within. The process of producing something new is inside. But we cannot see the process. This process is not visible. This process goes on inside. Only an individual can understand the process. Only an individual can feel this activity. So it is a matter of feeling. It is not a matter of seeing. But we can see the result. We can see the outcome and accordingly we give our comment, we give our opinion.

**Leo Tolstoy**, a Russian novelist and writer said, **“Art is not a pleasure or an amusement. Art is an organ of human life”**. According to Tolstoy, art is a very important part in our daily life. It is an organ of the body. We cannot separate art from our life. Every organ is essential for the body to survive. Like that, art is essential for survival. If there is no art, there is no life.

In 21<sup>st</sup> century, art can be used in a different way. Art can be used as a healing tool. Art can be used as a medicine, as a treatment, as a solution for a mental health problem, as a way for living a peaceful life, good life. Art can be used as therapy. Art really helps people to understand themselves, to know their problems, to know their emotions and anxieties better. If we know our problems, we can easily solve this. So, art helps us in solving many problems. It can solve mental as well as physical problems.

We need to understand that art is not simply a matter of copying something. Art is not simply making a beautiful landscape, a beautiful portrait, a beautiful still life or a beautiful nude. Art is beyond that. Art brings a new life for patients. Art gives life, satisfaction and finally peace. And peace is what we all are looking for. **Art gives Peace.**

## **Conclusion**

We all need to understand the value and importance of art. We are still not understanding. We think art is limited. We believe art is for special people, talented people, gifted people and extra-ordinary people. We strongly feel that art is not for business persons, engineers and doctors. But the truth is that **Art is for Everyone and Anybody can create art and Everybody is Creative**. We need to know that Creativity is something that can be learnt and developed; creativity is something that can be practised and improved. Therefore, we can develop our creativity. We all can improve our creative talent.

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