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DIM111.1 - Design History Essay



The Street Enters the House

Umberto Boccioni (1911)



(Boccioni, 1911)

Futurism was an artistic and social movement that celebrated advanced technology and urban modernity, with emphasis on speed, technology, movement and violence.

This essay will explore how Umberto Boccioni's 'The Street Enters the House' (1911) perfectly encapsulates the Futurism design movement, by expressing the dynamism and energy of the modern world. Through use of its visual characteristics and style, cultural influence on proceeding design movements, and the medium and technology used by Boccioni and other prominent futurist designers.

Emerging in the early 1900's, Futurism emphasized the dynamism, speed and power of the machine, as well as the vitality and restlessness of modern life. (White, 2019. Para. 1) Artists often used elements of neo-impressionism and cubism to create dynamic compositions that reflected the energy and movement of modern life.

Boccioni showcases this by using warped geometric elements and a distortion of perspective, representing the idea of all life, noises of the street and reality of outside objects flooding into a room upon the opening of a window.

Futurist paintings often used threadlike brushstrokes of color that depicted space and objects as fragmented and fractured. Some of the more well known artworks, from

artists such as Boccioni and his influencer Filippo Marinetti (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019. para. 2) mainly revolved around sculpture, paper drawings, and painted canvas. With Boccioni predominantly using oil on canvas, until his transition into sculpting. [REDACTED] Utilizing the innovative futurist style 'The Street Enters the House', repetitively fragments the surrounding buildings, creating a dynamic piece representing motion and speed, that had not been seen before the futurism movement.

Due to Futurism emerging just prior to World War One, the movement grew extensively as it was built upon violence and the glorification of technology and war. Led by Marinetti and Boccioni, the futurist ideology was coherent with the belligerent mood of late 1914 and 1915. [REDACTED] However, after the brutality of the first world war, many artists ended up rejecting the avant-garde notions of futurism, returning to using more traditional and reassuring approaches to art, a phenomenon described as the 'return to order'. [REDACTED] Although this occurred, Futurism left a lasting impression with its violent, revolutionary techniques, and influenced many other design movements such as Bauhaus, Constructivism and the Dada movement. [REDACTED]

Umberto Boccioni's 'The Street Enters the House' (1911) perfectly encapsulates the Futurism movement, and although the themes and ideas of Futurism are not as prominent in today's society, the design style has left a lasting cultural impact that can still be felt to this day, and has personally influenced me and my artwork. Through use of its visual characteristic and style, Boccioni's work effectively expresses the dynamism and energy of the modern world, the main ideology of the Futurism movement. Personally, I find the bold movement, broad scale and unique art style inspiring, and is something I can consider in future design work, such as experimenting with distorted perspective and fragmented geometric shapes.

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