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A Brief Analysis of Alberti's Art Theory - Taking On Painting" as an Example

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ABSTRACT

People's perceptions of artists in Italy, particularly Florence, have transformed since the 15th century. Artists have created works of art that reflect the humanistic ethos of the era, which has fostered the study of art theory by humanist scholars and contributed to the development of an art historical consciousness. In his artistic theory, the Italian humanist Alberti of the early 15th century reflected the new development of Florentine art. Alberti, an artist and theorist of the early Renaissance, examined the changes in artistic creation in the new era with a very avant-garde and contemporary perspective, and applied scientific theoretical knowledge to painting creation as a premise for studying painting art techniques. His influential treatise "On Painting" is regarded as the first systematic painting theory work in the West, establishing the groundwork for Renaissance art theory. His description of the sublime nature of painting elevated painting's status and reputation as an art form. It is also advantageous to facilitate the transition of painters from painters to artists. This article is founded on the theoretical content proposed in Alberti's "On Painting" art theory work, analyzing the painting concepts proposed by Alberti and its governing function in Renaissance art.

1. The historical context and basis for the composition of "On Painting"

Realism and the representation of the real world were both rejected by the artwork of the Middle Ages [1]. Painting, they felt, should represent the external world according to rationalist ideas, which established a theoretical framework for the Renaissance. Artists of the 15th century subverted the previous approach towards art and believed that painting should convey the external world according to rationalist principles [2]. At that time, the socioeconomic base was shifting, and with it came a corresponding movement in ideology. At the same time, humanistic and people-centered notions continued to develop in an unending manner. In the field of art, the idea of people-centeredness materialized itself via the artist's creative propensity toward the secularization of life and nature, as well as his scientific inventions. This was also a manifestation of the artist's scientific creations. Respect for the method that was used. Alberti is credited with making the following statement: "We don't need to elaborate on history like Pliny, but we must establish a new art of painting [3]." During

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Alberti's lifetime, the art philosophy of the early Renaissance was still in the process of gradually taking form.

During the Renaissance period, artists such as painters, sculptors, and architects continued to collaborate in organized groups [4]. In contrast to the Middle Ages, however, art practitioners and new apprentices during this time period increasingly preferred workshops founded by artists with more prominent reputations when making decisions over whether or not to follow this career. Apprentices eventually came to the conclusion that modeling their work after that of established artists was the best way to better their future chances in terms of both their pay and their social position [5]. This alteration, which represents the higher social position of artists, causes a shift in the direction that the whole business moves in.

The painters are the owners of the workshops, which means that they are responsible for the day-to-day commercial operations of the workshops as well as the workers' education and training [6]. The training that is provided via apprenticeships follows a standardized format. In order to learn the principles of painting from a master, it often takes apprentices close to thirteen years of practice [7]. Due to the fact that the objective of this cultivation model is to ensure the transfer of workshop skills, it is difficult to stimulate the creative potential of the apprentices. When seen through the lens of this paradigm, it is challenging for artists to break out of the confines of skill and attain more societal recognition owing to the rules imposed by the industry.

When the humanists were deeply cherished by the royal family and recognized by the society, the painter followed the lead of others and came to the realization that in order to achieve greater social recognition, he needed to have the same humanistic spirit and knowledge as the humanists in order to join a higher society. In other words, the painter wanted to join a higher society so that he could join the royal family category or rank. Having a scientific topic basis not only has the potential to change the existing education model that is centered on workshops, but it can also raise the status of artists and improve society's view of painting [8].

Up to the time of Alberti, art theory was considered to be a science that could be studied, and throughout this time period, a large number of works on art theory were created simultaneously [9]. The book "On Painting" was written in the year 1436. It was first written down in Latin, but it wasn't finished until much later. All of them are made available to people who work in the painting business as references in order to aid in the mentorship of new painters. In retrospect, throughout that time period, the manufacturing of paintings remained adhered to the workshop-based production techniques of the classical period [10]. The major difference between the two magazines is the demographic of the readership that each was intended for when it was printed. While "On Painting" is geared for a more general readership that may include humanists, "Artisan's Manual" is designed specifically for apprentices working in painting workshops. The readers of "On Painting" fall into this category as well. The fundamental reason why "Painting" was the first art theory book as opposed to "The Artisan's Manual" is that "Painting" was written by an artist. In addition to this, he authored "On Painting" in two languages, namely Latin and Italian. This allowed him to reach a wider audience, which included researchers of the humanities as well as those who worked in the visual arts. In addition to this, he worked toward the goal of establishing a virtue that raises the vernacular to the level of Latin.

Alberti gave a summary of the various chapters in the book in the introductory section of the article. The writing is precise while maintaining its conciseness. The material of the three volumes is progressive and self-contained, exhibiting Alberti's grasp of and aims for the next generation of painting art and encompassing the basic principles of painting. The expectations of the artist, as well as the concepts and prerequisites for painting methods, are included. The composition of "On Painting" draws inspiration from the format of rhetorical monographs written in ancient Rome. The

book is divided into three parts. Its foundation, practice, and conclusion each individually reflect a step in its methodical evolution.

It is critical to note that Alberti, while presenting this theory, expressly stressed the identification of self-study of painting as an artist, while simultaneously offering the key idea that painting emerges naturally. Both of these ideas are essential to understanding how this theory works. As a result, the distance between painting and scientific research and other areas of the humanities has been greatly decreased, which has led to an increase in painting's standing. The mathematical paradigm that Alberti developed concurrently provided the theoretical groundwork for the art of painting. He did this via the use of mathematics, elucidating the underlying notions and qualities of points, lines, and surfaces. He then constructively stated that the apparent surface of an item is not static, save for the features that are intrinsic to the thing. In addition to its properties, the contours of an item will display varied visual effects depending on the environment in which it is seen as well as the kind of lighting. In addition to this, he included the connection between color, light, and shadow, in addition to the relevance of proportion, claiming that a more realistic grasp of the universe may be obtained by comparing everything to humans. His expertise of mathematics allows him, in his work as a painter, to provide interpretations of works in which the focus is on how things appear visually.

Despite the fact that Alberti's theoretical conceptions are unable to radically change the paradigm of guild education, they do provide painters reasons to minimize their dependency on guilds and a degree of independence. This is also a reflection of the humanistic focus on being one's best possible self. When a painter's talent is recognized on a widespread scale, he opens himself up to the possibility of being commissioned by the royal family or other members of the nobility. The social position of a painter is significantly altered when the painter joins a social society for the first time; this has a tremendous influence on the painter. Because Alberti was well-read in ancient literature, he was able to appreciate the importance of the link that exists between literature and art. As a result of his efforts, painters were able to leave their guild and join the ranks of poets and intellectuals, which led to an improvement in the painters' overall level of expertise [11]. He concentrated his efforts on eliciting evidence for the sublime nature of painting from ancient sources.

In the second chapter, the author continues the discussion by focusing on the composition of paintings. In the first chapter, we spoke about how the painting is put together geometrically; in the second chapter, we talked about how the picture is put together physically. Composition, light, and outline were the three elements that Alberti identified as constituting painting. Young painters were shown by him that painting is a noble project that is worth their time and effort by explaining in detail the three aspects of painting that concentrate on visible reality: outline, composition, and light and shadow. He also emphasized that painting is an attempt that focuses on visible reality. Art, while pointing to the achievements of traditional artists as evidence to support its claim. The author opens this chapter in the same way that he or she began the previous one: by underlining the importance of painting and displaying their acceptance of and admiration for the individuality of the painter. Similar to the first chapter. The "Artisan's Manual" was written for a different kind of reader than the one who would be reading this chapter of Alberti's work. From this vantage point, those who have a more humanistic worldview are able to grasp the majestic essence of art [12]. In addition, Alberti investigated and alluded to the link between poetry, rhetoric, and painting by placing painting on the same level as the other two [13]. This contrast of poetry and painting is discussed in further detail in one of the chapters of "On Painting" written by Leonardo da Vinci, who was a passionate pupil of Alberti. In addition, Alberti felt that the contour might indicate the fluctuation of the object's outer boundary and developed the screen tool for detecting the location of the object's edge and the bounds of the visible surface. Both of these contributions may be attributed to Alberti. Alberti does not identify the three components of painting in order of significance; rather, he characterizes them

in the order that the painter applies them to the canvas. He considers composition, light and shadow, and a well-defined outline to be the three most important aspects of a successful shot.

If the purpose of the first volume of “On Painting” is to elucidate the fundamental concepts of painting through mathematical knowledge, and the purpose of the second volume is to explain how to complete a picture using three elements, then the third chapter of “On Painting” discusses how artists can achieve renown and acclaim in their respective fields. Painters need access to knowledge that is both succinct and essential in order to reach the summit of creative mastery. Alberti insisted that painters have a significant amount of information and a respectable cultivation, and he urged artists to develop significant ties with poets, etc., and to find inspiration for the production of paintings by expanding their knowledge and cultivation in areas that are not related to painting.

Painters are required to take into account, in addition to the painting process itself and their personal concerns, the feedback received from the audience [14]. For the purpose of providing support for his interpretation of the idea of an aesthetic existence, Alberti assembled extensive collections of ideas illustrating Stoic asceticism [15]. He thinks that the inherent and God-given order of nature is the ultimate aim and basic standard that artists try to reach in their work, and that this is what they should model their work after. He said in his essay titled “On Painting” that “this completely mathematical object shows us that this noble and beautiful art comes from nature itself.” Twenty years later, he was able to explain with certainty his grasp of what makes anything beautiful: the coordination of emotion and the inner body is what makes something beautiful [16]. The discipline known as geometry is responsible for this coordination by producing exact numbers, outlines, and positional information. Because elegance is the bedrock upon which natural law is built [17]. In the piece, Alberti is cited as stating that painting does not have to submit to architecture or any other arts that are dedicated to re-creating the order of nature, and that he believes this to be true. He came to the conclusion that “it is difficult to have art, except for those very special arts that are not subordinate to painting,” and for this reason, “I boldly believe that any beauty in things comes from painting [18].” Leonardo was in agreement with Alberti and believed that painting should be considered a legitimate art form.

In his book titled “On Painting,” Alberti defined his expectations for novice artists as well as the methods, techniques, and criteria that pertain to painting. He had a profound historical viewpoint, and he was able to perceive the new worth of contemporary art. He also highlighted the way ahead for the new art that was forming, which assisted in the development of the new art. It has assisted an increased number of artists, patrons, and onlookers in understanding and appreciating the new humanist art of Florence. At the very beginning of the Renaissance period, art theoretical viewpoints were already looking to the future. His conceptual contributions to the arts have been taken up and expanded upon by an ever-expanding community of artists. Painting has evolved as a result of the work of a great number of artists who have been affected by his art philosophy.

2. The theoretical impact

From the initial Latin printing of “On Painting” in Barcelona in 1540 to the Italian translation translated by Lotto Vito in Venice, Alberti anticipated that “On Painting” would be current and full of information, from the overall concept down to the most minute of specifics. Excellence in innovative innovation. He predicted that this collection would have an influence not just on humanists who study Latin literature, but also on creative activity. Specifically, he was hoping that it would have an effect on the latter. There are clear signs that Alberti had an impact on the artistic practice in Florence between the years 1430 and 1440, such as Ghiberti’s use of perspective in the design of the bronze reliefs that are located on the second door of Florence Baptistery. The various cautions that Leonardo da Vinci issued about art ideas and occurrences were all inspired by Alberti’s theoretical conceptions.

Da Vinci belonged to the latter school of Renaissance artists [19]. In addition to this, the book “On Painting” had a considerable influence on the fundamental tenets that underpinned the establishment of early art organizations. The Alberti paradigm may be seen in each of the underlying lines of Vasari’s “Biographies of the Artists” Artists in the late eighteenth century, in conjunction with the rise of neoclassicism in Europe, committed themselves to reclaiming the integrity of classical art via the direct or indirect study of the authority of the Renaissance. This occurred during the time period of the Italian Renaissance. The fact that this is the case reveals that “On Painting” was an important contributor to the growth of painting as a theory, a practice, and a socially meaningful art form.

After Alberti, art theory became increasingly focused on illuminating the artist’s one-of-a-kind viewpoint and the reasons behind why they see the world [20]; it is no more a straightforward narration of historical art phenomena, but rather a revelation of the growth and progression of art history. It is not just a simple description of the process and methods of artistic creation, but an analysis of the internal mechanisms and universal laws of artistic creation activities. It is not just a template for art learning, but a study of the goals and approaches of artist training, revealing new avenues for artistic development. The internal laws and various influencing factors; it is not just a simple description of the process and methods of artistic creation, but an analysis of the internal mechanisms and universal laws of artistic creation activities.

3. Conclusion

The book “On Painting” by Alberti was written during the early Renaissance and is considered an art theory work. The way it was written and the subject matter that it focused on both shed light on all facets of art theory studies throughout the early Renaissance. The evolution of art philosophy, beginning with “On Painting” In recent years, there has been a movement in the direction of study, away from an emphasis on methods and toward a route that parallels techniques and ideas. In terms of perspective study, painting composition, and painting aesthetics, “On Painting” gives advice for following generations as a landmark in the formation of painting theory throughout the early Renaissance. Additionally, it is essential to the development of painting and painting. It has made permanent contributions to the standing of artists by enhancing the practicability of painting methods and the verisimilitude of painting renderings of reality. In addition, it has improved the practicality of painting techniques. It is without a shadow of a doubt that it was a total revolt and full overthrow of the appearance of medieval painting, which supported the expansion of Renaissance painting art, played a leadership role in directing the development of art, and gave a model for artists who came after it.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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