

Abstraction: Between Impressionism and Non-Objective Art

by Polly Castor

Art Quotes:

"No great artist ever sees things as they really are. If he did, he would cease to be an artist... Art only begins where imitation ends. Art is the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known." Oscar Wilde

"The goal of abstract art is to communicate the intangible, that which eludes the photograph and normal seeing." Curtis Verdun

"Metaphysics resolves things into thoughts, and exchanges the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul." Mary Baker Eddy

"Do not copy nature too much. Art is an abstraction. I shut my eyes in order to see." Paul Gauguin

"Painting from nature is not copying the object; it is realizing one's sensations... A work of art that did not begin in emotion is not art." Paul Cezanne

"There is no such thing as realism or abstraction necessarily. You'd find that out very quickly if you tried to eat a Cezanne apple—you'd get a mouthful of paint. So pretty much everything you make, no matter how skilled or how technical, is still your interpretation of something. You are not re-creating something, you are interpreting what you see, always. And with abstract art, your possibilities for interpretation are very broad, and you can't do anything wrong. We are looking for opportunities, not correctness. Forget about the names of things— the more you think of something as a tree or a flower it's going to get you in trouble. Instead, only look at shapes and textures. One of the myths about abstract art is there's no subject there, or the artist is not looking at anything when they did that, and I would say that's ridiculous. Observation is a very important element, and is a way of collecting your visual thoughts. In summary, the only thing you can do wrong in art is not to make art. There's a lot of pleasure to be had along the way, so keep open and be free." Dean Nimmer

"The longer you look at an object the more abstract it becomes." Lucian Freud

"Painting is a blind man's profession. He paints not what he sees, but what he feels, what he tells himself about what he has seen." Picasso

"The truly modern artist is aware of abstraction in an emotion of beauty." Piet Mondrian

"I dream my painting, and then I paint my dream." Vincent Van Gogh

"The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance." Aristotle

"I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way – things I had no words for." Georgia O'Keeffe

"Art does not reproduce what we see; rather, it makes us see." Paul Klee

"Paint, not the thing but the effect which it produces." Stephane Mallarme

"There is no abstract art. You must always start with something. Afterward you can remove all traces of reality." Pablo Picasso

"Every artist dips his brush in his own soul, and paints his own nature into his pictures." Henry Ward Beecher

"Art to me is an anecdote of the spirit, and the only means of making concrete the purpose of its varied quickness and stillness." Mark Rothko

"I paint not the things I see but the feelings they arouse in me." Franz Kline

"The object isn't to make art, it's to be in that wonderful state which makes art inevitable." Robert Henri

"Color in a picture is like the enthusiasm in life." Vincent Van Gogh

"All art is a kind of exploring." Robert Flaherty

"Art isn't paint; it's love." Philip Hicken

"Art seems to me to be more a state of soul more than anything else." Marc Chagall

"Art is the essence of awareness." Louise Nevelson

"There is only one valuable thing in art: the thing you cannot explain." Georges Braque

"Art is either plagiarism or revolution." Paul Gauguin

"Art has something to do with the achievement of stillness in the midst of chaos." Saul Bellow

"Every production of an artist should be the expression of an adventure of his soul." William Maugham

"To make people free is the aim of art, therefore art for me is the science of freedom." Joseph Beuys

"Imagination is more important than knowledge." Albert Einstein

"A painting is good not because it looks like something, but because it feels like something." Phil Dike

"Creativity is the way I share my soul with the world." Brene Brown

"The worst enemy to creativity is self doubt." Sylvia Plath

"The first virtue of a painting is that it be a feast for the eyes." Eugene Delacroix

"Eventually I discovered for myself the utterly simple prescription for creativity: be intensely yourself. Don't try to be outstanding; don't try to be a success; don't try to do pictures for others to look at – just please yourself." Ralph Steiner

"One's art goes as far and as deep as one's love goes." Andrew Wyeth