

The Aesthetic Dimension of Dance Scenes in the Impressionist Movement

Noor Muayad Abd Al-Kareem Al_bawi¹
nooralbawi4@gmail.com

Ghasaq Hassan Muslim Al_kaabi²
fine.ghasaq.hasan@uobabylon.edu.iq

^{1,2}College of Fine Arts / University of Babylon

Abstract:

The research tagged (the aesthetic dimension of dance scenes in the impressionist movement) consists of four chapters, as the first chapter dealt with the research problem that was determined by the following question: What is the aesthetic dimension of dance scenes in the impressionist movement? The importance of research, the need for it, its limits, and the definition of its terminology. As for the second chapter, it was divided into two sections. The first dealt with the aesthetic dimension of dance scenes, and the second section dealt with dance scenes in the Impressionist movement. As for the third chapter, it was devoted to analyzing the research sample, while the fourth chapter dealt with the presentation of the results and conclusions reached by the research.

The first chapter is the methodological framework of the research

First: The research problem, its importance and the need for it:

Art adds aesthetics to things, stirs feelings and contributes to communicating information or philosophical views, and we can observe it by listening to a poem, or watching a musical play mixed with dance.

There were many types of kinetic expression arts known to man, and the most sophisticated and integrated between the body and soul was the art of dance. Dance is a variety of movements with an aesthetic rhythm and deep links to human behavior, customs and cultures that brought it

out to appear clearly in the history of ancient and modern civilizations of the world (Ahmed, 2019: 1).

Dance is the movement through which a person expresses his desire to be free from anxiety and fear of extinction, and in which he feels that he is stronger, richer and more beautiful. That is why man gives it all the care, and dance arises and changes with the change of peoples and the change of their culture. Therefore, it is a reflection of artistic culture, a statue of it, and a historical source of information about peoples. It carries in its arms the spirit and pulse of the age and the collective ideas of those who created it, in addition to the prevailing customs and traditions (Shaaban, 1993: 8) .

Movement is one of the most important features of life if it is not life itself, then there is no development without movement. Natural movement is like air and water moving things, so we can say that movement began with the beginning of human life, and it appeared before speech, but before forms of knowledge.

Movement expresses thoughts, feelings, human needs, motives and instincts, and the self in general.

Therefore, the research problem can be identified by answering the following question:

What is the aesthetic dimension of the dance scenes in the impressionist movement?

The importance of the research and the need for it are reflected in the following:

1. This research is an important study, to the knowledge of the two researchers, looking into a topic that investigates the aesthetic dimension of dance scenes in the Impressionist movement.
2. The importance of revealing the aesthetic dimension of the dance scenes in the Impressionist movement.
3. The possibility of benefiting from this study by researchers in the artistic and aesthetic fields, critics and plastic artists.

Second: the purpose of the research

The current research aims to: Identify the aesthetic dimension of dance scenes in the Impressionist movement.

Third, the limits of the search

Objective limits: The research was limited to studying the aesthetic dimension of dance scenes in the Impressionist movement. The two researchers will take the artworks of Edgar Degas as a model.

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Time limits: the period (1890-1920).

Spatial boundaries: Europe.

Fourth: define terms

- Distance: It is the opposite of proximity, and for Arabs it is the shortest extension between two things (Al-Bustani, D. T.: 290).
- Beauty: the unity of formal relationships between things perceived by our senses (Reed, 1986: 94)
- Scenes: A depiction of a group of people occupying a space with their actual or virtual presence in a certain period of time, a presence that is moved by drama, which is a simulated movement, a movement that imitates or represents human behavior (Second, 2005: 258).
- Dance: regular movements associated with conscious human purposes and meanings, it represents a non-verbal discourse, and a visual expression of issues, values, social and symbolic implications, understood through the cultural construction and historical context of society (Blacking, 2018:93)

The second chapter / the theoretical framework and previous studies

The first topic: the aesthetic dimension of the dance scenes

At the beginning of his life, man tried to describe his adventures, his feelings, his pain and his struggle with movements, perhaps mixing with them sounds and rhythm. Those answers are through movement and dance. Movement, then, is a basis in the development of life and thus the development of the language of presentation as it is a means of human visual communication and establishes the values of understanding and constitutes a communicative basis.

(Abboud, 2014: 11-17)

One of the most important dimensions of dance is the aesthetic dimension. Dancing is a human spiritual awakening that gives the dancer compensation for what he lacks of pleasure, pleasure, transcendence, harmony, sense of life and other sensations. It is an aesthetic revolution against the ugliness of life. To depict life as one of its moments in order to show the ideal of the universe in a part of the universe at the level that he understands. Likewise, the dancer chooses movements and distributes them to spaces in the void with a harmonious rhythm and sets off with his body like a sail sailing on waves that respond to every movement, every tone and every breath, so he travels away little by little from Reality towards integration into the universe.

(Sha'ban, 1993: 8)

There is no doubt that ballet can express all human values and convey them to the viewer through expressive movements, as it is rich in many kinetic elements with aesthetic features that

can express different attitudes and emotions. The idea of simulation in the language that expresses its own aesthetic values and that elevates the presence of kinetic formations and geometric formations of the design in an orderly manner that embodies the aesthetic dimension (Ashour, 2000: 32).

And we can say about dance that it is an aesthetic movement because it is an activity in which it is transformed from utilitarian ends. It is possible to quote daily movements from different activities and turn them into dance movements. Sports movement has value, importance and benefit, which is health and has aesthetics, but it is not dance. The meaning of human actions can change with the change of context, work. The human is not equivalent to the movement of the robot, and to understand the dance, it is necessary to understand the context in which it was placed in order for the behavior to be clear, and this is what makes a series of movements called dance is the context of performance or the infrastructure of the movement. What makes the dance different from the movements of ordinary people is the contrast, Human activities have specific purposes included in them, which are artistic purposes, and this is what makes dancing different from the movement of the automata or the monkey, so dancing is something else, not just a series of movements (Graham, 2003: 92)

The dance is a rhythm, in which the movements of the body are balanced with the musical tone, and in it a third element interacts with the movement and the tone, which is the collective feelings that are linked to the cultural heritage, and through the interaction of these three elements, the tendency and swaying of the body is determined so that this pattern becomes an aesthetic expression of the social self performed by the human body. Also, the continuity of these symbolic movements performs the function of expressing their past memories and rituals and linking them to the present (Abd al-Hayy, 2016: 135).

Plato describes dance as the innate desire to explain words with movements of the whole body, which is what some modern languages explain it, and better than this is what Aristotle described it with when he said that dance is “an imitation of actions, morals, and emotions, by way of body positions and rhythmic movements.” Socrates himself was He dances, praising this art because it gives health to every part of the body, and he means Greek dance of course.

(Durant, D.T.: 418)

The second topic: Impressionist dance scenes

Dance and painting were closely linked, and the relationship between them developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as the relationship between them was not as clear and as it appeared in the art of the twentieth century, as painters began to be inspired by dance, its aesthetic movement and the subject of the dancing body became one of the favorite topics of painters of modern art. Therefore, we find that the relationship between painting and dance has changed in the twentieth century, and the dancers became part of the painting and used their

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bodies as objects for painting. Dance played an important role in the second half of the nineteenth century, and it seemed to develop alongside the comprehensive new changes that Europe witnessed, which prompted plastic artists to pay attention to it, as dance constituted an inexhaustible source of inspiration for many artists, and the result of this was a new way Perfectly for the visual expression of the artworks of the great plastic artists, especially the Impressionists and those who came after them, as Impressionism is the most important artistic movement at the end of the nineteenth century in Europe (Alexandra, 2015:3).

Accordingly, the two researchers will talk about the impressionist art school and about the most important and prominent artists who dealt with dance in their artistic productions. Impressionism meant recording the dance movements of all the manifestations of existence that appear under the sun, and therefore the artists of this movement did not care to be in the professional because of their interest in the color movement of climate changes and the course of solar rays On the manifestations of existence, and this process was reinforced by addressing the changing visual angles in the perception of the painter, and therefore the subject of dance as movement was a favorite topic among the Impressionist painters as it was a message of happiness and joy in the movement of life that the Impressionists tried to record in their moving colors dissolved on the surface of the painting, and because the Impressionists were their goal The color pursuit of every light or physical movement, so the dance appears in their artistic achievements to enrich and confirm their aesthetic and stylistic goals in investigating the external scenes that do not calm or tire of revealing the presence of wind and the controversy of time and its continuity that dismantles the chromatic surface of static places and makes them undulating, not to mention the places The movement of the body of the dancers, which gives a strong impetus to the goals of the Impressionists and their new style at that time. Impressionism was also interested in recording the general form, as the minute details are not one of its goals, but its artists record the overall impression of things in a way that suggests the viewer to see the parts, even though they are not painted, which increases the charm, beauty and attractiveness of the viewer, and one of the characteristics of Impressionism is also the lack of interest in the objective aspect of the painting, as the forms blend in The painting becomes a whole and the dimension in the painting takes a single extension (Tallo, 2010: 566). Impressionism despised the soft colors and thoughtful touches of realist painters, and suggested bold colors, violent brushstrokes, and subjects immersed in natural light. And one of the basic principles of Impressionism was expressed long before its name appeared by the French landscape painter (Eugène Boudin) to the young then (Claude Monet) (Johannis, 2013: 2). Their paintings, including Edward Manet (1832-1883), who is considered one of the founders of the Impressionist school, was sincere in expressing the human image, and he enjoyed observing the era in which he lived, and there was something that characterizes the wanderer, the loafer, the recorder of the phenomena and characteristics of that society, and he was among the His subjects are the elegant gathering of people when he used to go to a concert in the gardens of the Tuileries Palace, or a masquerade party in the opera, or the pedestrians who crowd the Rue de Berne, for example. Manet looked at them with complete detachment as if they were abstract things in front of the camera lens, yet his

art transcended rigid objectivity, and although Manet did not merge with the characters that he painted with his emotions, he was immersed in them when he painted them with his visual perceptions and sensory emotions, and he was vigilant, and at the same time Excited loose, and his touch resembled that of (Fans Hals) and (Velasquez), both of them had a special admiration. As for its coloration, which seemed devoid of anything new, it was distinct. The somewhat sour freshness becomes tasteless at other times, but its effect is rich and violent. And when Manet (Palette) adopted the Impressionists, he did not completely abandon the gray and black colors with which he was able to create before 1874 his wonderful effects (Muller, 1988: 24). Manet was interested in drawing dance in his paintings, as in Figure (1), which is the famous dance painting "Spanish Ballet". The dancers came from Paris to perform at the Hippodrome in Paris, and Manet insisted that they return to his studio so he could paint them. Manet incorporated the subtle details of their dress and the vibrancy of colours, enhanced by the contrast between light and dark, to create a refined image of the famous dancers in the middle of one of their performances. The work highlights the French impression and Spanish art and culture. We feel the rhythm between the dancers and the presence of the musicians complete the whole experience of the performance.



figure (1)

The Spanish Ballet of 1862 by Edouard Manet

Although most representatives of the Impressionist movement came from the bourgeoisie, Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) was the only one who came from the working class and gave dance a prominent place in his artwork. Documenting the bourgeois class in its recreational activities with the women and the parties they held in the open air and the beautiful outdoor places on the banks of the river, and thus we see how he portrayed the prosperity and happiness of the upper social classes that he admired so much and which contradicts his roots to reveal his love to show the joy of life as if it were events taking place in The Paradise of Paradise, the colors appear brighter and purer, the women are more beautiful, happiness is at its peak, and meetings are in their most loving feelings. In his paintings, elegant men and elegantly dressed women with immaculate hairstyles, whether as pairs or individually against a neutral background, or as groups of dancing couples, smile at ease and delight in the rhythm of the waltz.

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However, the images shown by Renoir through his paintings do not constitute an objective presentation of reality, as it seems that the harsh and unpleasant aspects have been completely ignored and replaced by an ideal of harmony and peace, and therefore his approach to dance themes is an attempt to forget what is painful in life and stick to its bright vital side .

(Johannis, 2013:3)

In his drawings, Renoir combined clear, expressive colors, the solidity of bodies, and the third dimension, in a whiff that brings to mind the works of some ancient art giants, such as (Robbins and Titan) (Al-Bassiouni, 2001: 58), as evidenced by his picture of a group of his friends dancing joyfully in the sunlight as In Figure 2 one of Renoir's most famous paintings shows a raucous outdoor dance party, and the kinetic moment has been fixed according to an aesthetic vision chosen by Renoir to represent the height of the pleasure felt by the dancers. The artist's mastery of keeping movement alive in the work is the liveliness of color and the use of shadow and light in impressionistic splatters faithful to the realistic form. Small details to work on are many different stories that happen all at once in the space of the scene, there are people holding each other swinging to the music, women talking over their shoulders with friends nearby, a queue of people watching something interesting outside the dancers gathering, many moments different in life that we can relate to. In Figure (3) the painting (*The Dancers of Bougival*) is a small town 15 km from Paris and was a famous site for painting among the Impressionists. In contrast to his painting (*Dances at the Moulin de la Garrett*), this painting focuses on two people who are only friends of Renoir, and we can see that the shot is close to the dancers who took up the dominant space in the painting, but what is present tells us that these two are at a party, the focus leads These two people just have to create a little bubble around them, showing them both fascinated by each other's dance, ignoring the commotion around them. While the background still bears impressionistic elements, the dancers are depicted more realistically, which also distinguishes them from the mysterious surroundings in which they are dancing. This painting also contains two companion works painted in the same year, *Dancing in the City* and *Dancing in the Country*.



figure(2)

Dance at the Moulin de la Garrett 1876 by Renoir



figure(2)

The Dancers of Pujivale 1883 by Renoir

Edgar Degas (1834 - 1917) is considered one of the most important figures in the Impressionist movement. He was interested in the movement and its expression, and was particularly interested in depicting ballet dancers in many variations until he became famous for these paintings. With a rare artistic talent, he was able to depict the movements of ballet dancers from the movements of arms, legs, fingers and necks. The bodies are on the tones of the music, as if the viewer of his paintings listens to the musical melodies in the movements of his plastic dancers, as Degas accomplished many of these paintings behind the scenes in the theater during rehearsals or various performances, although he often reprocesses his paintings with great perfection when he returns to his studio, which includes a wide hall that allows the dancers to move around freely without standing specifically for photography. Dominant in the image for a long time, but not at the expense of any other element, but rather to be subject to his growing interest in color, light and movement. Degas struck a balance between these opposing forces and recorded life as best he could without violating the rules of art. He was not interested in landscapes and painting in the open air. Rather, he painted in his laboratory, in contrast to Renoir and others who painted in nature, although he was also a bourgeois (Al-Bassiouni, 2001: 61). And in the famous painting (ballet rehearsal) Figure (4) which was already painted in Degas' studio he was not allowed to paint behind the scenes at the Paris Opera, so he had to invite his subjects to join him in his studio. Like the photo, we can see that there are more events cropped up in this scene. The piano is broken and behind it, we see girls talking and looking to the left, which indicates that there are more girls we can't see.

Many things happen throughout the painting; Girls talking and laughing, a girl still dancing, the teacher playing the violin, and even a girl standing alone, upset about something. All these small moments that occur simultaneously are to confirm the sincerity of this scene. Degas is famous for works like this, where everyday life is the subject and is left as close to nature as possible as in Figure (5).

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Figure (4)

Rehearsal for the ballet 1873 by Edgar Degas



Figure (5)

Dance class 1870 by Edgar Degas

Ernst Opeler (1867 - 1929) is considered one of the pioneers of the impressionist movement who paid much attention to the subject of dance, and his drawings and paintings are an important discovery in the art of the early twentieth century, apart from personal and interior images, and he also depicted the social life of his time. Other matters in outdoor paintings, sports scenes, or paintings that represent a reflection of his existential state in wartime. The exclusive presentation of the Russian ballet Fig. 6, which was presented to the members of the Berlin Secession on May 5, 1909, caused great enthusiasm for Ernst Opeler. He became a lover of ballet and a convincing "ballet painter" in his specialty of painting these subjects. Opeler did not photograph the dancers resting in his studio, but he photographed them during rehearsals and performances on the stage, for this purpose he invented for himself a luminous pen that enabled him to draw in the dark hall, and these drawings particularly show ballet and dance in the originality of the movement. Ernst Opeler's special interest in Anna Paulois is most evident in his works, as in Figure (7), as no other dancer has inspired him more for his drawings. Since her performance in Berlin in 1909, Opeler has repeatedly illustrated her dance and created countless images, and in particular, her most famous solo dance, The Dying Swan, is immortalized in a large number of works. Opeler

was fascinated by the dancer of the Russian ballet troupe (Adolf Bulm) and (Wslow Nijinsky), especially his jumping strength and style that made him famous in this troupe, so he appeared in Opler's drawings and engravings frequently.

<https://www.art-scene.tv/en/events/details/cr/all/c/ernst-oppler.html>



figure (6)

Russian Ballet by Ernst Opeler



figure (7)

Dancer Anna Paulois 1917 by Ernst Opler

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901) is considered one of the distinguished artistic personalities in observing the movement of dancers and dancers. Characters who walk in rigor and seriousness, has mastered the use of pastels and oil colors. The colors of Lautrec were dark, showing reddish, bluish, yellowish, orange and violet structures with a clear creaminess and a distinctive heaviness (Ismail, 2011: 74-75). And in Figure (9) (Moulin Rouge Dance) This French painting is a window overlooking the famous ballroom, the Moulin Rouge, in Paris around the time of its opening, capturing the moment as if he had a camera, peering through the crowd to capture the different dancers and characters standing Around the great room, the use of the symbol encourages us to further research the painting and study the individual attendees. In the middle of the dance floor, we see a famous dancer from that time teaching a woman a new

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dance move and this classic Parisian scene invites us to walk straight to the famous dance board and experience the beautiful era for ourselves. The owner of Moulin Rouge even hung this painting on the bar's wall.



figure(9)

Moulin Rouge 1890 dance by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

Indicators of the theoretical framework: In light of what was discussed in the theoretical framework, the two researchers came up with a set of indicators, which are as follows:

1. Dance is a rhythm in which the movements of the body are balanced with the musical tone, and in which a third element interacts with the movement and the tone, which is the collective feelings that are linked to the cultural heritage.
2. Dancing gives a person compensation for what he lacks of pleasure, pleasure, transcendence, harmony, a sense of life and other feelings.
3. Dance expresses all human values and conveys them to the viewer through expressive movements, as it is rich in many kinetic elements with aesthetic features that can express different attitudes and emotions.
4. Some philosophers and theorists described dancing as the innate desire to explain words with the movements of the whole body, and that its origin is the natural expression of sensual lust, and the art of grouping in arousing sexual desire.
5. Dancing through the movement of the body has become a means of artistic expression, and this is what embodies the relationship of dance with painting.
6. Dance was associated with painting and constituted an inexhaustible source of inspiration for many artists, and the result was a completely new way of visual expression of the artworks of the great plastic artists, especially the impressionists.

7. The Impressionist movement was interested in dancing, and the methods of the Impressionists in drawing dance varied, some of them painted it collectively, the other painted it individually, and the third painted it behind the scenes.

Chapter Three: Research Procedures

First: The research community: The two researchers decided to limit the research community to what they found through the Internet and the research literature, which are ten models, due to the wide time period that the research deals with and the large number of models.

Second: The research sample: The research sample was chosen in proportion to the limits of the research, as two models were chosen to be a sample for the current research.

Third: the research tool: the two researchers relied, in analyzing the research sample, on the indicators of the theoretical framework.

Fourth: Research Methodology: In analyzing the sample, the two researchers relied on the descriptive analytical method.



Fifth: Sample Analysis:

Model (1)

Artist: Edgar Degas

Work name: Al-Najma (Dancer on stage)

Material: pastel on paper

Size 44 x 60 cm

Year: 1878 AD

Ownership: Courtauld Institute of Art - London – England

General Description :

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The painting consists of one character, the background is nature, the floor is brown, and the painting is characterized by a rectangular figure.

Sample Analysis:

In the foreground of the painting, we see a ballerina performing a dance movement alone through the leg and arms, as this movement achieves a calm rhythm, so we find the arms extended to the sides in a simple movement, as if the dancer was flying in space in skill, while she was standing on one leg and in kinetic balance, and the leg disappears. The other, leaning her head to the right, bending back, closing her eyes to show the success of her performance and her sense of confidence, and rosy cheeks to indicate the satisfaction of achievement, and a dreamy expression appears on her face that carries a calm and sincere emotion, and the dancer appears in her clothes as if she is the focus of light in the painting, as the rule of color contrast is achieved. In this painting, by highlighting the white color mixed with light yellow, which is the color of the dancer and her clothes, as well as the presence of flowers on her white dress, a black ribbon extended on her neck, and a crown above her head, while the color of the floor and background consists of brown and green combined, and the background colors are clear as if they represent the rocks behind the dancer. As the feet of some dancers appear, the painting shows the rhythmic movement with kinetic expression, in addition to that in the left part of the painting there is a man hiding behind the curtain.



Model (2)

Artist: Edgar Degas

Work name: Dancers on stage

Material: oil on canvas

Measurement:

Year: 1879 AD

return:

General Description :

The painting consists of three dancers wearing green ballet uniforms, and in the background of the painting a group of dancers appears in orange clothes, the floor is brown, and the painting is rectangular.

Sample Analysis:

This painting represents a group of dancers, and we see some of them at the forefront of the composition wearing green clothes and others representing the background and wearing orange clothes. According to the musical rhythm, we find the other group of dancers in the background standing without a kinetic performance, where their facial expressions appear to follow what is happening in front of them, as they represent the depth of the painting.

As it is clear in this painting, the distribution of human gatherings with their dramatic gestures in a way that indicates the artist's intelligence and his selective artistic mentality. We notice only three dancers who represent the forefront in the painting as they exploit the largest amount of space for formation through their clothes and movements, while in the background the group that represents the depth of the painting, is achieved in This artwork is an aesthetic composition full of vitality and harmony.

Chapter Four: Findings and Conclusions

Research results: In light of the analyzed artistic works, the two researchers reached the following results:

1. The aesthetic dimension appeared in Edgar Degas' works through his investment in the photographic image and its fixation of the dancing movement to capture lively scenes, and in addition to excluding its composition in the perspective and the angle of the upper scene, it combines the beauty of movement with the dress and elegance of ballet.
2. The aesthetic dimension in Degas's works represents the joy of the color scene, as if the dancers' bodies and costumes were a pictorial argument for conveying that aesthetic that combines contrasting colors in their rhythmic and light escalation between red and green.

Research conclusions: In light of the foregoing results, the two researchers reached the following conclusions:

1. The impressionist artist took the dance scenes as a popular aesthetic subject for painting. The dance expresses the movement that supports the modernist artist's interest in the idea of art for its own sake or pure beauty.

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2. The dance movement represents an aesthetic language and revolutionizes the stillness of painting towards the chromatic emotion that the impressionist glorified. The dance movement is a wave of abstract line and color.

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