



Article

Modern Artistic Process in Uzbekistan

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Abstract: Uzbekistan, as the cradle of ancient civilization, boasts a rich artistic heritage deeply embedded in national identity and spiritual values. Since independence, the nation has witnessed a dynamic resurgence in its fine arts sector, particularly in painting, fueled by state initiatives, institutional support, and the revitalization of historical memory. While the transformation of Uzbek painting has received attention, there remains limited scholarly synthesis of the artistic trends that bridge traditional heritage with contemporary expression in the post-independence period. This article aims to analyze the evolution of modern artistic processes in Uzbekistan, focusing on the emergence of new genres, reinterpretations of historical themes, and the influence of national identity on artistic expression. The study identifies two major trends in post-independence Uzbek painting: the revival of historical portraiture and a shift towards decorative abstractionism, both rooted in national values and spiritual heritage. It highlights the role of institutions such as the Academy of Arts in supporting creative growth, and the emergence of a new generation of artists blending traditional aesthetics with global modernist elements. The research presents a comprehensive overview of contemporary Uzbek art through the lens of cultural transformation, tracing how historical consciousness and modern visual language coalesce in national art practices. The findings underscore the importance of art education, institutional backing, and cultural policy in fostering a vibrant artistic ecosystem, while reaffirming the role of art in shaping civic consciousness and preserving national identity amid globalization.

Keywords: Painting, Culture, Creativity, Form, Artist, Color, Evolution, Art, Interpretation, Skill, Image

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1. Introduction

Uzbekistan, a land steeped in rich cultural and spiritual traditions, has long been a cradle of artistic expression. From ancient wall paintings to intricate miniatures, Uzbek art has reflected the aesthetic sensibilities and historical consciousness of its people. In the post-independence period, the nation's fine art has entered a new phase of development, marked by renewed state support and the emergence of diverse stylistic directions. The establishment of the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan in 1997 and subsequent government decrees have played a significant role in fostering an environment conducive to creative freedom and innovation. The modern artistic process in Uzbekistan is a dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity, where national values are reinterpreted through contemporary lenses. Veteran masters and emerging artists alike draw from the country's spiritual heritage to produce works that resonate both locally and globally. This resurgence has given rise to vibrant trends such as historical realism, decorative symbolism, and abstractionism, each contributing to the evolving narrative of Uzbek painting. At the heart of this movement lies a profound commitment to preserving national identity while embracing artistic plurality. This article explores the development of modern painting in Uzbekistan, highlighting the contributions of key artists, the influence of historical

transformations, and the ongoing integration of national aesthetics with global artistic discourses.

2. Materials and Methods

The methodology employed in this article is based on a qualitative and interpretive approach[1], relying primarily on historical-analytical and cultural-contextual analysis[2]. The study investigates the evolution of modern Uzbek painting by examining its development from independence to the present[3], using a combination of literature review[4], document analysis, and observation of artistic practices. Archival sources, governmental resolutions[5], academic publications[6], and institutional data from the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan serve as key reference materials to trace the chronological and ideological transformation of the artistic process[7]. Additionally, the works and styles of renowned artists such as Chingiz Ahmarov, Ural Tansiqbaev[8], and Javlon Umarbekov are analyzed to identify trends and themes that define the Uzbek artistic identity[9]. The methodology emphasizes the interrelationship between art[10], cultural policy, and national identity by exploring how contemporary Uzbek painting integrates historical narratives[11], traditional motifs, and modern aesthetics[12]. This approach also accounts for sociopolitical factors—particularly those following independence—that have influenced artistic expression[13], education, and state support structures. By synthesizing visual analysis with policy review and scholarly discourse[14], the study offers a comprehensive understanding of the current artistic landscape in Uzbekistan, with particular focus on the continuity and innovation within national fine art practices[15].

3. Results and Discussion

Uzbekistan is the birthplace of an ancient civilization that has given the world rare examples of material and spiritual culture. It is a blessed land where great scholars, craftsmen, and unique artists shed their umbilical cord blood. Today, the new spirit and interpretations observed in the work of architects, artists, and folk masters working in various areas of modern Uzbek art and culture are fueled by this ancient and rich spiritual heritage, our immortal values, and most importantly, the great blessing called Independence.

Since the first years of our country's independence, our art, like all other spheres, has begun to develop. The wide opportunities created by our state have become a powerful factor encouraging creative people and their activities. In particular, the establishment of the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan in 1997 was an example of the high attention and care shown to the development of our national art. However, such a scientific and artistic academic institution exists only in a few countries.

The Resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-3022 dated May 31, 2017 “On measures for the further development and improvement of the sphere of culture and art” and No. PQ-3920 dated August 26, 2018 “On measures for the innovative development of the sphere of culture and art in the Republic of Uzbekistan” are of great importance in the development of the sphere of art.

The history of Uzbek painting has been studied by such scholars as L. Zhadova, A. Umarov, R. Toqtash, D. Saidova, T. Mahmudov, V. Lakovskaya, N. Ahmedova, L. Shostko, K. Oqilova, A. Egamberdiev, A. Khakimov, D. Alimkulova, D. Umarova, N. Kultasheva. Today, all conditions have been created in our country for the free creativity of artists. The material and technical base of creative organizations is being strengthened. For example, the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan is carrying out significant work to preserve our ancient traditions, develop our national culture and art, vividly and impressively reflect the global successes of our republic on the path of independent development, and create new works.

Also, this institution plays an important role in informing art lovers about artistic processes and news in our country and abroad, creating opportunities for them to exchange ideas and experiences, and for young people to enjoy the master classes of skilled

artists. In addition, this institution is an integral successor to our art schools, which have long existed in our homeland and have made a unique contribution to the development of world fine, applied, and miniature arts. Since its establishment, the institution has been making a worthy contribution to the development of folk crafts, fine and applied arts, and further expanding the activities of representatives of the industry. In addition, this structure was entrusted with the tasks of creating a modern art education system, conducting scientific research, and organizing creative exhibition activities on a modern basis. It goes without saying that the achievements are based on the boundless love of our people for art and the Motherland, their faith in the future, as well as the creation of a creative environment for them.

Art is based on nationality, and at the same time promotes universal human ideas such as goodness, nobility, friendship, solidarity, and spiritual maturity. It is wrong to consider all works that come to our country from abroad as art. In today's globalization process, in the era of rapid information exchange, one of our main tasks is to teach young people to distinguish between black and white, good and evil.

Uzbek fine art has a large school of skill founded by such famous artists as Chingiz Ahmarov, Urol Tansiqbaev, Rahim Ahmedov, Ne'mat Ko'zibaev, Mannon Saidov, Bakhtiyor Boboev, and Ru'zi Choriev. Studying this spiritual heritage and instilling its essence in the minds of young people is an important and necessary process.

Currently, among the artists who have the status of academicians of the Academy of Arts, there are painters, graphic artists, sculptors, masters who are outstanding representatives of our culture, and art historians. For example, Alisher Mirzaev is distinguished by his works expressing the reality of life in a cheerful spirit, in a variety of colors and forms, while Samig Abdullaev tries to incorporate the forms and atmosphere of the culture of the Middle Ages into his works. In the work of Javlon Umarbekov, new and new aspects of national and universal values are vividly reflected. Throughout the 20th century, artists who created in the historical genre revived episodes related to the struggle of the working people for freedom, the courage of national heroes, and figures of science and culture. In the previous period, the main attention was paid to the themes of revolutionary history, the struggle for Soviet power, and the genre of historical-revolutionary painting developed. Historical portraits and paintings occupied a special place in the work of artists such as V. Ufimsev, Ch. Ahmarov, M. Nabiev, V. Zhmakin, N. Koziboev, M. Saidov, G. Abdurakhmonov, B. Babaev, R. Choriev, and J. Umarbekov.

By the time of independence, the content and essence of this subject changed. The fact that historical subjects and historical portraits, as representatives of national values, reflect the artist's civic perspective and attitude to national heritage found expression in the creative works created during this period, and the interpretation of images and subjects changed. After all, during the fundamental turns of history and socio-ideological transformations, perceptions of the heroes of the time change, and a spiritual need arises to create vivid images reflecting the essence of the era.

The historical subject, which revived historical memory in the 1990s and played a huge role in the formation of the consciousness of a new civil society, determined two new trends in this genre of painting. The first trend was the creation of images of our historical ancestors from the perspective of returning to our values, objectively assessing the past, and re-studying the national heritage. This tendency found its artistic and aesthetic expression in a number of portraits created by A. Abdullaev, M. Nabiev, S. Abdullaev, R. Khudoybergenov, A. Mamatova, A. Ikromjonov, S. Rahmetov, A. Nuritdinov, A. Alikulov, etc. As a result of the desire to find new historical heroes and restore spiritual ideals, the historical theme came to the fore, and the features of the historical portrait and historical painting genre were renewed.

The second group - the tendency to pay attention to ancient national values with a long history, to re-perceive them, was formed literally in the new era. This was reflected

in the works of M.Yuldoshev, E.Masharipov, B.Jalolov, A.Ikromjonov, O.Muinov, J.Umarbekov, R.Shodiev, Sh.Abdullaeva.

The conditional-decorative trend, which began a new stage of development, was able to transform the idea of the classical heritage of the East into a new and important organizational part in Uzbek painting. The emotionality and expressiveness of color, the conditionality of plastic forms, the representation of the world in the harmony of resonant ornaments, through symbolic colors, were manifested in the works of artists of the decorative trend N. Shin, A. Mirzaev, R. Shodiev, I. Valikho'jaev, Sh. Abdullaeva, and the younger ones N. Shoabdurahimov, D. Mamedova, A. Ivanova, T. Karimov, O. Zalevskaya, S. Kurtjemil, K. Boboev, Z. Mansurov. From the analysis of their works, it can be concluded that artists understand decorativeness not only as an expression of the nature of national traditions, but also as a whole, coloristic, rhythmic-spatial composition of the work.

In the works of such young artists as D. Mamedova, I. Kulagina, A. Ivanova, O. Zalevskaya, S. Kurtjemil, the search for new opportunities for combining the principles of modernism with national traditions, the tendency to work with abstract coloristic compositions is observed.

Abstractionism in Uzbek painting found its reflection in the individual creative style of such artists as A. Krikis, V. Okhunov, B. Jalol, V. Burmakin, Yu. Useinov, M. Abdullaev, V. Chub, V. Apukhtin, A. Nikolaev, Ye. Kambina. In particular, the works of A. Krikis, the leading representative of Uzbek abstractionism, are distinguished by the fact that they evoke various impressions and at the same time achieve a harmony of ideas through a non-figurative depiction of reality in its own way, in clear colors and geometric shapes.

In short, the spiritual values inherent in the culture of the Uzbek people, the national heritage in general, have found their natural expression and have become in demand in the modern artistic process, and the new trends emerging in modern painting have developed in connection with national aesthetics and updated ideas, while also harmonizing with world artistic processes.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the modern artistic process in Uzbekistan reflects a dynamic synthesis of national heritage and global artistic trends, shaped significantly by the country's independence and cultural policy reforms. The development of painting has been profoundly influenced by institutions like the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan, which not only preserve traditional values but also nurture new expressions and innovative practices among contemporary artists. The revival and reinterpretation of historical subjects, the evolution of decorative styles, and the integration of abstractionism all point to a vibrant, pluralistic art scene that honors its past while embracing modernity. Artists across generations, from pioneers such as Chingiz Ahmarov and Ru'zi Choriev to contemporary figures like A. Krikis and D. Mamedova, have contributed to the richness of Uzbek visual culture by embedding national identity, emotional depth, and philosophical insight into their works. The focus on spiritual values, cultural continuity, and aesthetic renewal positions Uzbek painting as both a custodian of identity and a participant in global artistic discourse. The continued support for artistic education, creative exchange, and scholarly research ensures that Uzbekistan's fine arts remain a vital and evolving domain, deeply intertwined with the nation's historical consciousness and future aspirations.

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