

David Hockney



BACKGROUND

Artist – David Hockney

Lived – 1937 – present

Born in – Bradford, England

Hockney was always seen as an eccentric in Bradford and he never really cared what people thought of him. He was obsessed with opera and literature and this later inspired his work and set designs.

Rejected Movement/s – Hockney was originally associated with the Pop Art movement but his early work had expressionist elements.

Inspired by – Hockney has been inspired by cubism and Picasso's work throughout his artists career. His work has similarities to the work of Edward Hopper, Giorgio Morandi, Van Gogh, Picasso and Kandinsky. His landscape paintings have many similarities to the fauvism and post-impressionist art movements.

Studied– He studied at Bradford College of Art and then at the Royal College of Art in London.

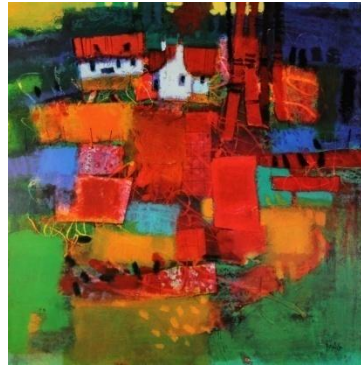
Style – Hockney was a keen photographer and this influenced his painting style. At the beginning of his career he painted portraits, landscapes and created collages inspired by literature. He also worked on stage set designs, graphic design and photographic collages. His more contemporary work is bigger and bolder in colour. He is one of the most well known artists emerging from the 60s art scene in Britain.

Movement – No specific movement but has associations with pop art, realism and expressionism.

Main Subject Matter - Portraits, family scenes, landscapes, buildings, swimming pools and everyday scenes.

Went on to inspire – A new generation of colourful contemporary painters. Scottish artists like Francis Boag and JOLOMO (John Lowrie Morrison) use colour in a similar way to Hockney.

Hockney still creates work to this day. He now uses an ipad to help him create artwork as age has made painting vast canvases difficult for him.



Francis Boag



JOLOMO (John Lowrie Morrison)

Influences from the Wider World

- Hockney was inspired the films that he watched frequently with his father. He was drawn to the light and the drama of Hollywood
- He was influenced by literature and poetry in his early work.
- He studied alongside Peter Blake and Allen Jones so was inspired by the Pop Art culture of the 1960s and 70s.
- Hockney moved to Los Angeles in 1963 and was influenced by the relaxed and sunny atmosphere. He became well known for his paintings of swimming pools and this reflected the culture of his life in LA.
- With the development of photography as an artistic and technological medium, Hockney began to use photography to capture images of Californian homes. He would print polaroids and stick them together, he called these creations a 'joiner'. He became well known for these collages.
- Having become quite famous in the 1960s and 70s, Hockney was influenced by, and friends with, other contemporary artists like Andy Warhol and actor/ filmmaker / artist Dennis Hopper.
- During Hockney's formative years, he was inspired by the popular culture of the 1960s and 70s. It was a time after the war that saw the introduction of colour tv, American influences, rock and roll and a free, liberal society.
- In his more recent work, Hockney has returned to his roots in Yorkshire and created many landscapes that illustrate the changing seasons and moods of the countryside.



Andy Warhol – Pop Art



David Hockney – 'A Bigger Splash' - 1967



Peter Blake – 'Self Portrait with Badges' - 1961



Peter Blake – 'On the Balcony' – 1955-57



David Hockney – 'joiner' example



Hockney at work





Title – **Winter Timber**
 Artist – **David Hockney**
 Date – **1998** Medium
 – **Oil on canvas** Size
 – **274.32 x 609.6 cm**

Hockney created this painting in 1998 and it was shown as part of his 'A Bigger Picture' exhibition alongside older paintings and his more recent iPad drawings. The series of countryside scenes that were created from the 90s until now show Yorkshire scenes. As Hockney came from Yorkshire this was a landscape that he was familiar with. His use of bright and sometimes surreal colours, has similarities with the fauvist movement. He also adds pattern and texture in the foreground and this post-impressionist technique has similarities with Van Gogh's 'The Starry Night'. He created these canvases in situ (outside in the landscape) and in the studio. He would combine the series of canvases in his studio and add the final details then the image was complete.

- Oil paints to create a thick, bold colour on the canvas
- An abstract and vivid colour palette
- Full painting has been created by combining 15 canvases
- One point perspective to draw the eye to the end of the path
- How did he create a focal point?.
- Does it feel realistic or abstract?
- Hockney uses line to create tall, vertical trees that give a sense of height to the landscape composition
- Composed of simple shapes and lines
- A lack of tone or shadow throughout the painting
- He has used texture, where and how?
- The use of texture is more prominent in the foreground than in the background

Fauvist landscape by Andre Derain



The Starry Night, Vincent van Gogh, 1889



Henri Matisse, Red Room 1908





Title – **Three trees near Thixendale, Winter 2007**
 Artist – **David Hockney**
 Date – **2007** Medium –
Oil on canvas (8 canvases) Size – **2 x 5 m each**

This painting has been created using oil paints on canvas. It is part of a series of 4 paintings that show these trees during the Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. This painting was part of Hockney's exhibition held at the Royal Academy in London called 'A Bigger Picture'. After decades of painting in Los Angeles and focusing on portraiture and swimming pool landscapes, Hockney has created paintings that are inspired by the Yorkshire countryside. These landscape paintings have similarities to the post-impressionist style of Vincent van Gogh and the fauvist approach of Wassily Kandinsky.

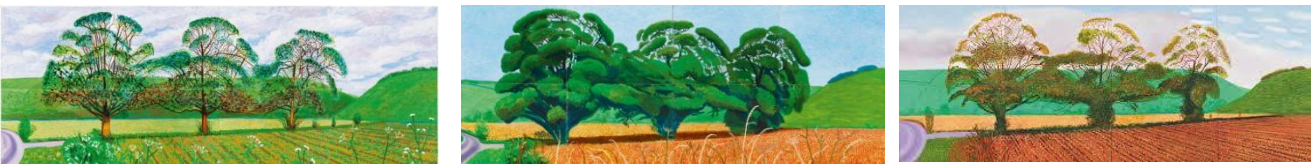
- Hockney created a series of paintings of these three trees
- He has used oil paints on a series of 8 canvases
- Hockney has used perspective to create this landscape composition
- Hockney has used a bright and bold colour palette
- The trees provide a vertical element and a focal point to the painting
- Like many of Hockney's paintings he has used colour, line, shape, pattern and texture to create a simplified and abstract piece of work – where are these visual elements used?
- Hockney uses lots of thin, sculptural lines to create the shapes of the tree
- The angular shapes of the fields give order and an agricultural feel to the painting
- It depicts a wintry scene. How do we know this?
- The lack of people in the painting also adds to the feeling of a quiet, empty bit of countryside



Post-impressionist landscape by Vincent van Gogh – 'Mountainous Landscape behind Saint Remy' - 1889

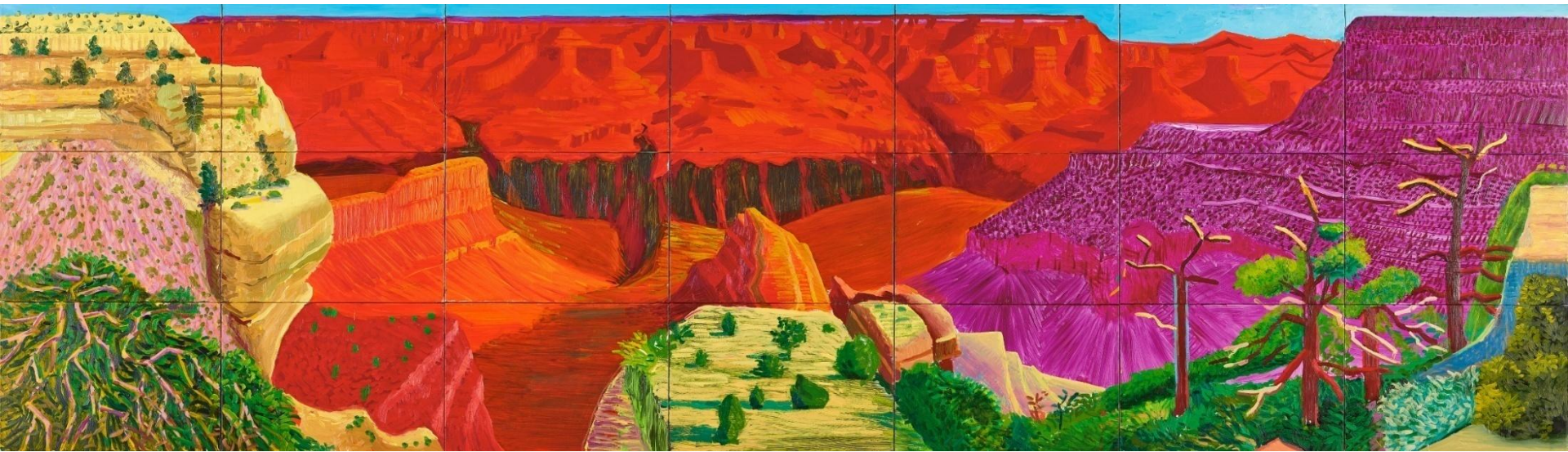


Fauvism landscape – Wassily Kandinsky – 'Winter Landscape - 1909'



Three trees near Thixendale in Spring, Summer and Autumn

Title – **A Bigger Grand Canyon** Artist – **David Hockney**
Date – **1998** Medium – **Oil on canvas** Size – **2.7 x 7.44 cm**



Media/ techniques/ materials

Hockney has used oil paints to create a thick, bold colour on the canvas. He has used an abstract and vivid colour palette. The paint has been applied heavily to create strong colours. It is a simplified version of the actual landscape. He has created the full painting by combining a series of smaller canvases. Each section of the painting has been blocked in with colour and then detail has been added. Hockney has created a composition that is open in the middle section but busier at the sides. This makes it feel like you are being drawn into the canyon itself. Hockney has used a variety of big brush marks to block in the main colours and smaller brushes and knives to add details and shadow.

Visual elements

Colour is the prominent visual element of this work of art. Hockney has chosen to abstract the realistic colours of the landscape to create a colourful and bright composition. He uses line to identify the shapes of the cliffs and rocks and also to add detail. He has created shapes that accentuate the vastness of the landscape. In the foreground, he has created large areas of rock and in the background he has created small shapes to enhance the 'steps' of the canyon. The trees are quite sculptural in shape and add vertical lines to the composition. The complex mixture of shapes throughout the painting create a sense of chaos and movement.

Mood /atmosphere

The vividness of the colours create a feeling of warmth and fun. The subject matter is vast and makes you feel overwhelmed. The use of perspective draws your eye to different areas of the painting and it has an adventurous feeling to it, a bit like a western film set. Because you cannot see behind some of the rock faces in the foreground it feels layered and like a theatre or film set. There are no people in the painting and this makes it feel abandoned or empty.