Jackson Pollock’s Blue Poles And Salvador Dali’s Persistence Of Memory: A Comparative Analysis

During the era of contemporary art, artists with similar circumstances have different opinions, different experiences in their culture and society, which leads to them to have different styles and genres of their artistry. Jackson Pollock’s abstract expressionist painting “Blue Poles”, includes the technique of dripping and pouring oil paint onto the canvas that evokes a theme of turning into “curling arabesques of liberating improvisation that makes absolute sense in a beautiful way.” On the other hand, surrealist Salvador Dali’s artistic masterpiece “Persistence of Memory” possesses an erratic passage of time while we’re dreaming. Their unawareness of time passing by and their inaccuracy of description of past events is what leads them to the chaotic and fragmented nature of their artistic lives, and arguing why this is the perfect metaphor for indescribable beauty.

Of course, during the modernism era, everyone expected the idea of precision and perfect composition to be the artistic idea, but Pollock and Dali had a different perspective on it. They both had a rather radical method of creation, such as how Pollock was throwing paint around as if he was creating a recipe for anarchy, and how Dali becomes theoretical with the illusion of time passing by when we’re asleep. The dripping lines of blue, red, green, yellow, black and grey curly paint lines on “Blue poles” are randomly placed online, especially when eight blue poles pull to focus as the main character. During Jackson Pollock’s private life, he underwent several Jungian psychoanalysis in order to treat his alcoholism, and so that had a profound impact on having him painting to express his feelings, which also follows the protocol of expressionism. When he felt shocked and disappointed in the New York art world in the 1950s, full of oily black paintings, consisting of distorted faces, floating breasts, and anguished confrontations of male and female bodies, it reminded him of the terrible crisis in his life, blurry and drunken moments that led to him to be distorted by reality and childhood. Therefore, he was able to invent a new kind of painting, as grandiose and free as the abstract swirls when it takes shape. This was able to help shape a new brilliant light on the American tragedy, where he was able to bring the shred of abstraction to life, even when the whole world was falling apart around him.

Salvador Dali was on the edge of discovering Sigmund Freud’s work on the significance of subconscious imagery and having an association with Paris surrealists. In order to bring images from his own subconscious mind, he induced hallucinatory states in himself known as “paranoia critical”. From there, his painting reached maturity rapidly. He portrayed a fantasy world wherein ordinary items are compared, disfigured, or generally transformed in a strange and silly design. Dalí depicted those articles in careful, horrendously sensible detail and typically put them inside grim sunlit scenes that were suggestive of his Catalonian country.

When looking at the work “Blue Poles”, it was not a conventional easel painting. He was painting this work on the floor, without having any brushes to use or intend to use, so it doesn’t portray any identifiable things. His erratic splashes of paint were meant to show that he wanted to be able to communicate to us the way he was feeling and thinking at the time he made the painting “Blue Poles”. Based on the history of the process, Pollock’s friend Tony Smith threw glasses on canvas trod on it with him when Pollock was severely depressed and drunk at the

same time. This explains why there were footprints and shards of broken glass on the work, resembling the fragmentation of his feelings. This was why all the depression and the blurriness of his past events had a profound impact on his work. Similar circumstances go for Salvador Dali. Maybe the most well known of those confounding pictures is The Persistence of Memory (1931), in which limp dissolving watches rest in a frightfully quiet scene. He illustrates in this scene of how useless and arbitrary our normal concept of time is inside the dream state. He had several theories on this idea such as why is the society in a state of awakening preferable to one that is asleep. The dream state is important in surrealism, but jokes, humor, and sarcasm play a central role in Surrealism as well. Dali adds that sarcasm to add a darker meaning to the work. As by the appearance, it looks like in this dream world the clocks are melting away like they're slowly losing their powers. This painting could refer to one of Salvador Dali's own memories of his own childhood surroundings. The clocks would also be representative of his adolescence fading away because he cannot remember accurately about how much time has passed. This tells us how both of these artists' circumstances toward creating their work were similar.

How their circumstances meet would be similar, but their approaches to chaos and fragmentation is completely different. While it is true that Dali and Pollock both have no precise memory of their past events, leading to chaos and fragmentation, their way of doing things is different. Firstly, when looking at Jackson Pollock's work, he was working toward the theme of Abstract Expressionist form, where he was expressing by the unconscious mind using large paint brushes to make sweeping marks. It's like he is putting all of his inner impulses to work on it. In fact, this idea was inspired by the idea of surrealism that Salvador Dali was tending to. Irrational juxtaposition or distortion of images was Dali's profession, to be brief. To explain the idea of surrealism, Dali explained that "Surrealism is destructive, but it destroys only what considers to be shackles limiting our vision." He relied on self-induced paranoia and hallucinations. It, however, isn't abstract, because the vision was blurry, but it was based on a realistic view.

Jackson Pollock was putting all sorts of medium without thinking through while drunk, due to alcoholism. He was expressing the dark past events of being with all sorts of colors. Blue poles being the main focus was about how this work was incidental. He had no intention of making the work like this. So to make the focus of the differences, is that Dali's work was meant to be intentional with a bit of nostalgia with focus on the thresholds of sleeping, and seeing how useless the concept of time is in dream state. It had a meaning implied to it. Pollock painted this work with no goals of how to execute it. It was known to be accidental, but does express his feelings about it.

In conclusion their unawareness of time passing by and their inability to describe their past events is what led them to the chaotic and fragmented nature of their artistic lives, and arguing why this is the perfect metaphor for indescribable beauty. The artists here have been led with depression during the process of constructing their artwork, in which it was also one of their major sources. Both have seen through the idea that they would be able to express their theories, ideas, and feelings with art, but it didn't come without digging deep into themselves and the being of the society, in which that led to chaos and fragmentation that came into the contemporary life of art. We can see that this new genre of art they developed had helped with broaden our horizons of expressions with the art. It would be reasonable to see that Jackson Pollock and Salvador Dali has turned the indescribable masterpiece to a piece of legend that we see today in museums.