The Impact Of Futurism On Modern Art And Design

Futurism was an avant-garde art and social movement founded in Milan in 1909-1914, though it was a short movement but created a great impact on the world of art that is discerned in art work of the 21st century. It was an organized art movement that was originated by the Italian poet Fillipo Tommaso Marinetti that launched a manifesto of futurism in the French daily newspaper Le Figaro on 20 February 1909. Marinetti insisted artists turn their backs on the past in order to free Italy from the weight of past processes and procedures and focus on the present and future and eulogized the modernity and the vital noisy life of the industrial city. The emphasis of the movement was speed, technology, youth, violence, war and objects such as the car, the airplane and the industrial and social ambiance. Since the artists wanted to avoid static art they opted to represent speed and motion in their paintings and sculptures but many works contain hard geometric lines and planes like cubist style.

The painters and sculptures of that era particularly started working on portraying objects from various points depicting motion and fragmentation in their art work instead of focusing on one single point. They tried to capture movements in the paintings. Having stated earlier, the futuristic art bases itself on two main themes The Machine and The Motion and they favored war without hesitation because they celebrated the notion of new technological and social advancement. They were very close to the world of advertising, like business. Futuristic paintings may look like a mix of a stroboscopic and high speed photograph in one painting. Their work was based on intuition (as they were obsessed to foresee and eradicate the old and ordinary methods of art) and capturing intangible objects such as movement, motion, speed etc somehow since they tried to capture continuous motion into a series of short or instantaneous fragments and their art was enriched with a power to synthesize the manifold experiences of sense and memory.

The Futuristic art movement that celebrated modernity, dynamism, motion, violence, innovation and kineticism still moves us 100 years later. Like The Futurists depicted hurtling trains, human bodies in motion, machine-gun fire, electric lights and metropolises under construction. Poggi says that the movement still influences almost any artist interested in kineticism or working with light. Chris Bangle, the Chief Designer of BMA admitted that he could be able to see a fourth dimension i.e. of the wind because of Boccioni’s sculptures. Even if we see today’s wallpaper, floor tiles and other interior decors’ creations that give us a third dimension effect, all are under the influence of Futuristic art.

Futurism had influenced many other twentieth century art movements such as Art Deco, Vorticism, Constructivism, Surrealism, Dadaism etc. Nevertheless, the ideals of Futurism remain significant components of modern Western culture; its special attention on youth, speed, power and technology finding expression in much of modern commercial cinema and culture. Marinetti's thought, especially his 'dreamt-of metallization of the human body', are still strongly prevalent and reflected in Japanese culture, and surface in the works of artists such as Shinya Tsukamoto, director of the Tetsuo-Ironman film that is Japanese horror movie made in 1989. A revival of sorts of the Futurist movement in theatre began in 1988 with the creation of the Neo-Futurist style in Chicago, which utilizes Futurism's pivot on speed and briefness to create a new form of immediate theatre.

Today if we visualize impressionistic concepts such as youthful, dynamic, powerful, and trustful or any other intangible form like speed and motion then Italian futurism is a perfect art movement to look for inspiration. From flying airplanes to flashy lights to moving objects to curvilinear patterns, they laid hold of all movements of life. All our industries, departments and circumambient life including art, painting, sculpture, architecture, design, ceramics, fashion, film, photography, advertising, free-form poetry, publications, music, theater and performance and features are influenced by Futuristic Art Movement.