Does art matter in today's world?

By Bob Wasserman

The Committee on the Visual Arts has succeeded in placing several large abstract pieces of modern art on the MIT campus in the past decade. There must be a reason behind these acquisitions some of which, such as Transparent Horizons, were quite controversial.

One question remains, however: Why is MIT concerned with installing such formal, visual, non-utilitarian, and purely aesthetic pieces of art? If this question is answered, the Northern European painters were more concerned with portraying the human physique, and along the same lines a number of modern art, such as Transparent Horizons, were quite controversial.

New technology of the past century has permanently changed art, and perhaps the breadth of the Renaissance art masterpieces will never be repeated. Photography has replaced painting as the perfect capturer of detail, but modern art has become almost exclusively abstract. Two-dimensional pictures have become the most important and most popular art form today. Many subjects of modern art as a technique are concerned with examples of our technologically oriented society.

Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo's early schooling was as a painter, and he used his incredible imagination throughout his life, in both his artistic and his scientific endeavors. Leonardo's approach of the engineering ability, also and his humorous drawings and notes laid the foundation for modern scientific observation.

He was an early Italian artist, helped develop the science of perception. Brunelleschi, who solved the puzzle of the design of the Florence Dome, was not only a masterful architect but also an expert engineer, for he overseeing much of the construction of the dome. Michelangelo studied and painted science in order to understand the human physique, and along the same lines an unknown artist contributed the excellent illustrations for Vesalius' book on human anatomy.

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