

Roy Lichtenstein – 6

Interesting Facts

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Roy Lichtenstein was a leading figure of Pop Art, along with Andy Warhol and Jasper Johns. His signature style imitates comics, with thick lines, offset colors, and Ben-Day dots. His appropriation of commercial art elevated the status of "low art" during the 1960s. Behind the iconic images, here are the following facts:

1. Lichtenstein had a wide variety of interests and skills aside from art.

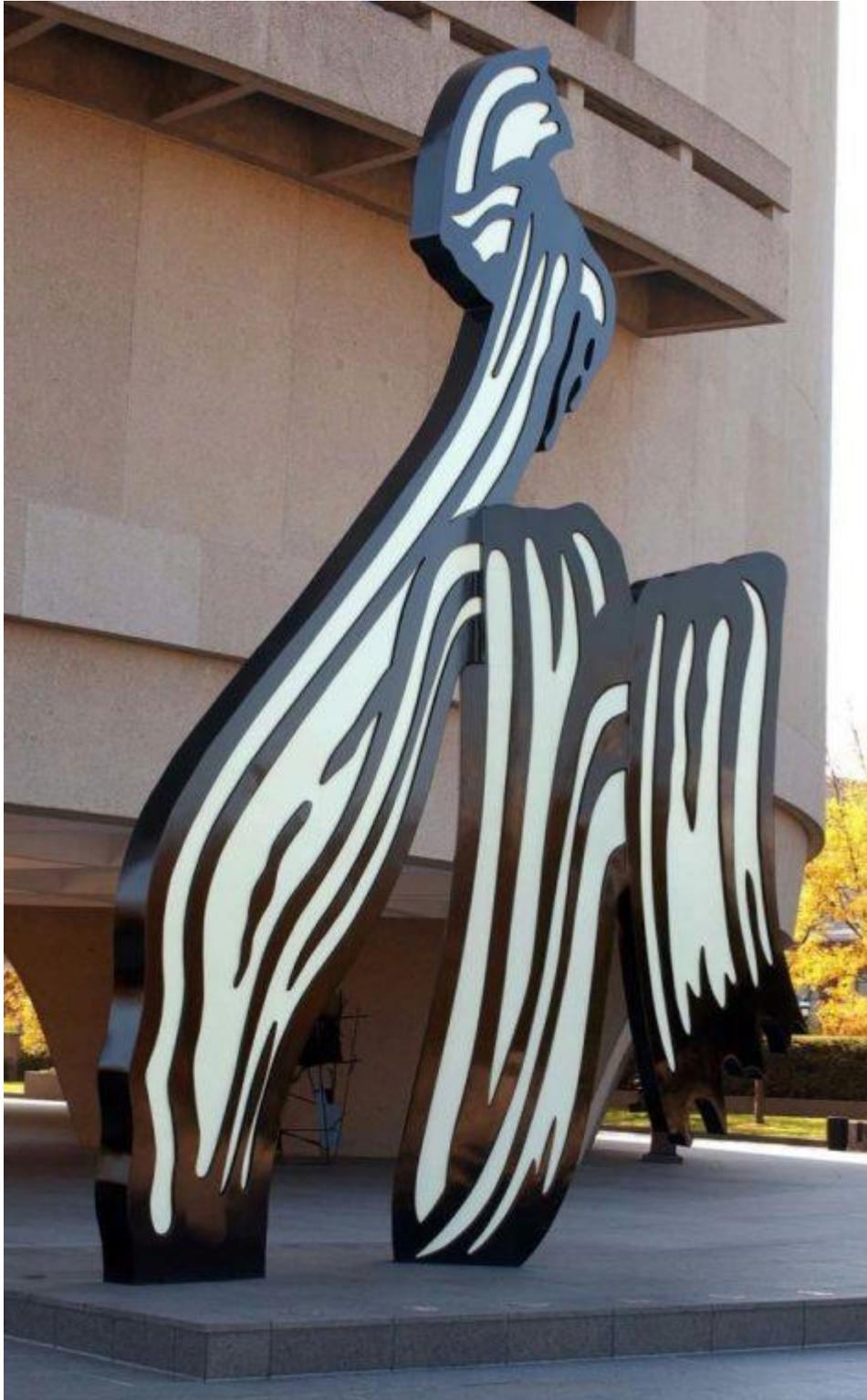
- As a child, he built model airplanes and listened to science fiction radio shows. He frequented the Museum of Modern Art and the American Museum of Natural History.
- Roy Lichtenstein also played clarinet and piano. He loved listening to jazz and formed his own band during his teenage years.

A comic book panel depicting a woman with long, wavy blue hair floating in the water. She has a distressed expression, with her eyes closed and a tear visible on her cheek. Her mouth is slightly open as if she is crying or shouting. The water is rendered with blue and white halftone patterns and black outlines, suggesting movement and depth. A speech bubble is positioned above her head, containing the text: "I DON'T CARE! I'D RATHER SINK -- THAN CALL BRAD FOR HELP!". The overall style is characteristic of classic comic book art, with bold lines and a limited color palette.

I DON'T CARE!
I'D RATHER SINK --
THAN CALL BRAD
FOR HELP!

2. He began his career as a Surrealist and Abstract Expressionist painter.

- After the war and earning his Fine Arts degree, he mainly painted biomorphic figures. Various subjects include racecar drivers and street workers; insects and birds; and knights and dragons.
- He met his first wife Isabel Wilson at an exhibition. She was an assistant at the Ten-Thirty Gallery.



3. He served as an infantryman during World War II.

- Lichtenstein saw combat in Germany, France, and Belgium. He was also trained in piloting, engineering, and linguistics.
- His pilot training harks back to his most famous work, "Whaam!" The painting replicates a scene of aerial combat lifted from a panel in All-American Men of War #89.



 Roy Lichtenstein's Whaam!, 1963

4. Lichtenstein met the original artist of the "Whaam!" panel in the army.

- Irv Novick served as an officer at the boot camp where he trained at.
- Novick saw Lichtenstein's skill as a draftsman and reassigned his duties. Lichtenstein went from mopping latrines to making posters and signs.

5. Lichtenstein developed his own techniques and innovations.

- During his work as a commercial artist, he fashioned a rotating easel. This allowed him to paint from any angle with ease.
- For his comic and cartoon works, he used an opaque projector to display his chosen panel on a canvas. He then traced the drawing with paint and added the Ben-Day dots with a stencil.



 Roy Lichtenstein's Look Mickey, 1961

6. His son inspired his first Pop Art painting.

- Roy Lichtenstein created "Look Mickey" after his child pointed at an illustration from the Little Golden Book series. The boy said, "I bet you can't paint as good as that, eh, Dad?"
- This was not Lichtenstein's first use of Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck. Years prior, he had expressionist renditions of the two characters in his paintings.

By giving new context to commercial images, Roy Lichtenstein gave rise to the Pop Art movement. By combining painting and comic books, he closed the gap between "high" and "low" forms of art. Do you enjoy looking at Lichtenstein's paintings? Let us know in the comments section!

For any art student or emerging artist, learning about the lives of great masters from the past could be quite exciting. Their life stories show us different paths to success. While we could simply romanticize their fame and fortune, it's important to understand that becoming a great artist takes some time and investment. For some, finding the right school or mentor is key, and for others, finding the right learning resource is more than enough.

Luckily, there are now plenty of tutorials online to learn important skills like drawing and painting. But sometimes, these tutorials could be quite disorganized and it becomes frustrating when the entire

process is not revealed. There are only a few tried and tested courses out there that really takes students from beginner, intermediate, to advanced levels. One great resource that comes highly recommended is artist Nolan Clark's Online Art Lessons. He offers free courses that are easy to follow, and if you're serious about improving your art skills and becoming more confident in building your own art style, there's also a more detailed members' section that offers access to valuable features.

Apart from reading through the step-by-step process, the unlimited access provides hundred of videos for students to choose from. Practical theories are explained, the videos show in-depth techniques and students could follow along with the tutor easily. The best part about Online Art Lessons is that students could even receive feedback from tutors and peers after the work is completed. Compared to more traditional art schools that take a lot of time and money, this learn-at-your-own-pace system is something that offers incredible value if you are really passionate about succeeding as a creative.

To learn more about other inspiring artists, check out their interesting facts here.

References

Lichtenstein Foundation
The Art Story
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