

**Autonomous Practice
Digital Craft**

Research Document

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Lifestyle and Transformation Design

About Antoni Tàpies

Antoni Tàpies

Antoni Tàpies, born in Barcelona in 1923, is one of the most important European abstract artists of the twentieth century. The oeuvre of the self-taught artist consists of drawings, paintings, installations, collages, lithographs and other graphic work.

Throughout his life, Tàpies has worked in different styles: from figurative and surreal to abstract.

Tàpies has become known with his expressive material painting. In his work the research and experiment with materials is central. It is not the outcome, but the process - the investigation of matter - that matters. Tàpies applied varnish to a cloth and covered it with non-usual materials, such as marble, plaster, wood, iron wire, dust or sand. He did this to bring the artwork as close as possible to reality - the earth.

Although the works are abstract, the spectator can always find something concrete in the art of Tàpies. The artist considered it important that there is something in the work that is directly related to life, an image, idea or suggestion.



Antoni Tàpies, self portrait

Antoni Tàpies

Key words that summarize the meaning of Antoni Tàpies work:

Experimental
Layers
Extraordinary

Textual quotations from Antoni Tàpies that I found interesting:

"If I can't change the world, at least I want to change the way people look at it."

"Painting quickly is a calculated act to block out rational thought."

"An image means nothing. It is just a door, leading to the next door. It will never happen that we will find the truth we are looking for just in an image; it will happen behind the last door that the spectator discovers the truth."



Antoni Tàpies Artwork examples



Antoni Tàpies, Embolcall, 1994.



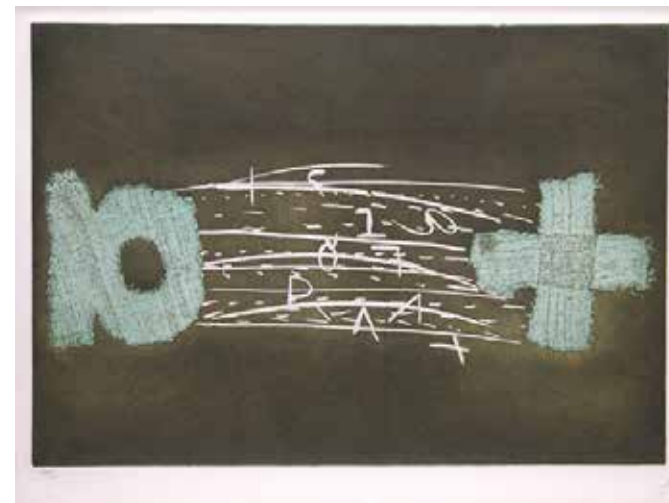
Antoni Tàpies, empremta de màniga, 1974.



Antoni Tàpies, L'Enveloppe, 1968.



Antoni Tàpies, Matèria-mirall, 1993.



Antoni Tàpies, Esperit Catalá, 1974.

My chosen art work

Artwork: Noir aux deux arcs beiges (Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, room 25)

Artist: Antoni Tàpies

Year: 1961

After several years of making some surrealist paintings, Antoni Tàpies's work completely disappears from figuration in 1953. He uses paint as matter and applies it in thick layers, sometimes mixed with sand and cement. The result is large, almost monochrome surfaces in black, grey and other colors, evoking the beauty of old weathered walls behind which a mysterious world is hidden.

Material use:

Oil Paint, black, grey and shades of ochre.

Cement

Sand

When I saw the artwork for the first time, the dark color immediately had an impact on me. It has something mysterious, and the little bit of yellow ochre you are going to think more. What story is behind this artwork? How many layers have been used? And why do you see that little bit of color? I also find the shapes that are made with the sand interesting, they are a sort of framework. What interests me about the work is why Tàpies made the choice to make the artwork total black and what was his story or thoughts behind it?



Noir aux deux arcs beiges, 1961

My copy

I choosed to steal/copy the art work of Antoni Tàpies because I am intrigued by the creative process of the artist. What happens when an artist like Tàpies stands in front of a white canvas?

After some research about the artist I found out that, Antoni Tàpies always gives a strong value to material in his work. Gypsum, glue, sand and numerous other materials are spread on the canvas with a broom, thus forming a sort of colored and thick plaster, also made of cuts and splits.

The painter moreover, cuts and removes pieces of this surface, blows the background and adds new layers. The artwork does not represent things, but it is a thing in itself; it does not tell a story and does not imitate objects of everyday reality: it is already completed and sufficient for itself as a colored and tangible matter. Tàpies uses materials extraneous to the vocabulary of painting such as woods, papers, fabrics, sheets, and straw, or imprints casts or real object in the thick dough of color.

The result is an extraordinary tactile and narrative charm of the surfaces and the pictorial materials, which are loaded with intense existential values and political symbols.

The imprints left by the artist is the crust of color, which appear random, gradually reveal themselves as creative criteria. They are elements that "inhabit" the material, helping to shape the image.

The exact thing I want to steal from the artwork is the materials Tàpies used. I decide to recreate the right top of the work, I think that is the most interesting part because every element Tàpies has used appears in it, sand, cement, black paint and of course the little part of ochre yellow color.

By going through process of making the copy it made me think about why Tàpies would make such a dark painting but yet with a little bit of colour? What was he saying with it. Maybe it has the same meaning as the yin and yang? Or maybe also the aim that something softness must stand against rough.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PeNPxIGvdQQ&t=96s>

My copy



Research question

My research question before getting to my transformation of the artwork will be:

How can you give a dark mysterious artwork > a 'magical' and new meaning/life?

Using the same materials Tapiés did but give the artwork a positive meaning:

Giving nature material a meaning?

Give raw material such as cement, a soft story.



Dark mysterious artwork



Metaphor: people are stronger than they think they are



Give raw material such as cement, a soft story.

The story behind the transformation / STATEMENT

Showing a way of reborn or resilience in the artwork/
sculpture

The sculpture will be a way to show of our desire for light and for freedom. The work blur the boundary between painting and sculpture. The cement-like paste that I will use is made by mixing paint with sand and other material, looks like clay or volcanic lava and reminds me of the quality of the earth.

Instead of using materials to paint an idea, the material itself is the central subject. The human being and the familiar objects of everyday life are important themes that provide earthbound counterpoints.

What I wanted to create with my sculpture is that I used the original artwork of Tapies himself used his canvas and convolute it to a object. You can still see a bit of the black painting. By doing this I want to turn around my thoughts about the painting, from the black mysterious artwork to a object that stands for a new life, show of our desire for light.

What I also want to say with this artwork is that people are stronger than they think they are, such as the example I give before, with the flower growing out of the rock.

Just like Tapies often shows in his own artworks, a way of 'overcoming'

Inspiration



Transformation



End result Copy & Transformation



Copy



Transformation

Sources

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