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Do Psychedelics enhance artistic ability?

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## Overview

Artistic, as defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2016), is showing imaginative skill in arrangement or execution. According to Oxford Dictionaries (2017), artistic indicates something that is “aesthetically pleasing” and includes a keen sensitivity to such. Due to the subjectivity of artistic ability, the enhancement of it is difficult to investigate, thus, the debate is broken into four categories: Motivation to Produce, Creativity and Innovation, Perception and Technical Skills, and Aesthetic Quality. By analyzing each individually, a holistic conclusion will be achieved.

A psychedelic drug, or hallucinogen, is defined as “any of the so-called mind-expanding drugs that are able to induce states of altered perception and thought, frequently with heightened awareness of sensory input but with diminished control over what is being experienced” (Jenkins, 2007). Dr. Jenkins, a distinguished professor at Baylor University with an extensive array of publications, has conducted thorough research into drugs. With this definition, a divergence of mentalities towards the debate emerges. Psychedelic induced hallucinations are characterized by vivid colors, complex patterns, and incomprehensible transformations of one’s environment (Dahl, 2015). Consequently, this contributes to the notion that these hallucinations inspire and amplify artistic ability. Regardless, the lack of control and skewed perception may weaken artistic ability.

Psychedelic drug is a broad term that includes many substances. To enhance clarity, three prominent hallucinogens shall be discussed in this report: lysergic acid diethylamide, psilocybin, and mescaline. Lysergic acid diethylamide, known as LSD or “acid”, was developed by Dr. Albert Hofmann in 1938 (LSD-Assisted Psychotherapy, 2016). Referred to as the most potent psychedelic, the synthetic drug, LSD, primarily effects the cerebral cortex, involved with perception and mood, and the locus ceruleus, involved with interpreting sensory signals (Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), 2007). Before 1965 when LSD was classified as a restricted substance in the United States, it was used in various studies to treat chronic addictions, neuroses, and terminally ill individuals (Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), 2007). Mescaline and psilocybin, also called “magic mushrooms,” resemble LSD and induce similar effects, but these are naturally occurring substances and have a long history of use by humans (Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), 2007).

### **Overview: Research**

Provided here is a summation of research studies that are key facets to the paper.

Dr. Oscar Janiger, an experimental psychiatrist and professor at the University of California Irvine, is internationally recognized for his pioneering research on LSD, which is noted for its vast number of participants (Doblin, 1999). From 1954 to 1962 he conducted numerous studies and is estimated to have administered LSD to 1,000 participants (Doblin, 1999). At the time, the drug was legal and little was known about its effects, prompting Janiger’s research. A sub-study, the second largest he conducted, focused on artists and how LSD impacted their creativity. Approximately 100 artists, including renowned figures such as Anais Nin, Aldous Huxley, and Cary Grant, took part in the study (Doblin, 1999). During some of the experiments, Janiger had artists paint a Kashina Doll before and during the LSD

experience and in other tests, artists under the influence of LSD periodically drew portraits of Janiger (Janiger, 1999). Along with reports of behavior and speech, nearly 250 pieces of art were composed and submitted to art critics and historians to be judged (Janiger, 1999). Unfortunately, Janiger's research was ended prematurely due to the classification of LSD as an illegal substance and much went unpublished. Therefore, a personal interview with Janiger and a 40 year follow up study will be relied upon for data.

Another pivotal study is one of Robert Crumb, a renowned comic artist. In a case study by Matthew Jones, Crumb's work from 1958 to 1978 is closely analyzed to discover the effect that psychedelics had on his art (Jones, 2007). Jones is an erudite Assistant Professor and founding chairperson for the Department of Communication at County College of Morris who earned his doctorate in mass media and a masters in arts (Matthew T. Jones, 2017). He has been published in a wide array of peer reviewed scientific journals, conversely, he lacks learning in psychology thus limiting his proficiency on psychedelic drugs (Matthew T. Jones, 2017). Jones utilizes a coding system, adapted from the research of Janiger and Dobkin de Rios, of 10 categories of perceptual alteration techniques and assigns them numerical value as they appear in Crumb's work (Jones, 2007). By quantifying these art techniques, a diagnostic report of stylistic shifts due to the use of psychedelics is created. This study is crucial as it uses the personal experience of a known artist, employs a longitudinal method, and includes both quantitative and qualitative data to expose the effects of psychedelics. Other instances of individual's experiences are only personal statements while this study includes numerical data collected from a long period of the artist's life; thus, this study provides necessary insight.

The research of Louis Berlin et al. is another key source. To assess the impact of psychedelics on creativity, Berlin administered LSD and mescaline to four prominent graphic artists and used the Bender-Gestalt test, draw a person test, and evaluated their doodles to evaluate their visual perception and creative ability (Berlin, 1955). The Bender test is an assessment of visual-motor functioning that scores subjects on accuracy and organization when replicating from memory a geometric pattern as this replication "requires fine motor skills, the ability to discriminate between visual stimuli, the capacity to integrate visual skills with motor skills," (Beard, 2017). The other test had the artists draw a man before and during their experience and their artwork was judged by art critics and historians. This study stands out due to the use of objective testing strategies, while still employing the judgments of art critics and historians, effectively strengthening the reliability of this research.

Frank Barron conducted an experiment on psilocybin and its effects on artists that was part of a series of studies starting in 1960 and ending in 1962, led by Timothy Leary, called the Harvard Psilocybin Project (Montuori, 2003). Leary led this project and is often challenged for his extreme views, however, Barron maintains a staunch reputation in the scientific field (Montuori, 2003). Barron received his doctorate from Berkeley and is noted as a pioneer in the study of creativity having received the American Psychological Association's Richardson Creativity Award in 1969 and its Rudolf Arnheim Award for outstanding contribution to psychology and the arts in 1995 (Murphy, 2002). Though the research project was ended due to concerns about safety and validity aimed at Leary, the experiment that will be considered was

conducted by Barron and recordings of the personal quotes of artists provide crucial insight for this research.

### **Motivation to Produce**

An intrinsic facet of artistic ability is a powerful desire to create. This fundamental requirement is subject to influence by psychedelics, thus the assessment of it is crucial to determine the enhancement of artistic ability.

In Barron's research with psilocybin and artists, one subject experienced a profound and enduring impact on his artistic method. Ensuing the psychedelic episode, he stated,

I did about six hours work in two hours time. I did not worry about what I was doing--I just did it...When painting it generally takes me an hour and a half to two hours to really get into the painting and three or four hours to really hit a peak. Tuesday I hit a peak in less than half an hour. The aesthetic experience was more intense than I have experienced before (Barron, 1964).

Psilocybin altered this artists' creative process, making it easier for him to begin and finish pieces. Greater ease to commence the artistic process implies that psychedelics make an individual's imagination more readily available. From this, it can be derived that psychedelic use has beneficial enduring impacts on artistic ability. A positive impact on motivation was also seen in the case study of Crumb. A large facet of his work originated from one LSD experience that he describes as "fuzzy" in terms of visual and auditory (Jones, 2007). He stated,

I let go of trying to...have any...fixed idea about what I was doing and I started to be able to draw these...stream of consciousness comic strips...All the characters that I used for the next several years I thought up during this (Jones, 2007).

Crumb's description of the experience indicates augmented perception that led him to break free of societal constructions and inspired him to illustrate in an entirely novel way, for both him and the culture of the time. Psychedelics induce a kind of freedom in artists. Creation can freely flow; thus psychedelics act as a catalyst for production.

However, it has been shown that psychedelic use stunts immediate motivation. In Berlin's study, three of the four artists refused to paint.

They reported that they did not want to concentrate on their work, but only wanted to 'look and feel.' The act of painting was now burdensome and fatiguing. The subjects acted as though they were incapable of sustained effort (Berlin, 1955).

The effect that psychedelics have on one's inspiration to create is subject to individual differences. The fact that these individuals are professional artists makes this example particularly interesting as it indicates that even with a predisposition for artistic creation, psychedelics can hinder one's motivation to create. This implies that the effect evoked by psychedelics is a result of individual factors, thus, the impact of the experience on inspiration to create is not a systematic one. This is further supported by a LSD creativity study testing creative performance on a standardized test published in 1967 by Leonard S. Zegans, M.D. It was inferred,

that greater openness to remote or unique ideas and associations would only be likely to enhance creative thought in those individuals who were meaningfully engaged in some specific interest or problem (Zegans, 1967).

Leonard S. Zegans, an Ivy league educated Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry at The University of California, San Francisco, has established a staunch reputation for his renowned and extensive research into his field, however, as he is recently deceased information available on him may be jaundiced to portray him positively (In Memoriam: Leonard S. Zegans, MD, 2015). While not specifically involved with artistic production, this study highlights a crucial point. Psychedelics do not inspire individuals without a strong pre-existing desire to create. Individuals, even those who are artists, will not be inclined to create unless the desire to do so is dominant enough to overcome the lackadaisical effects of psychedelics. This coincides with the previous point.

Ultimately, psychedelics can impart lasting inspiration and bolster the drive to create, however, this drive is absent during the actual experience and is highly reliant on the individual. The enduring impacts of increased motivation are more important than the immediate regression as the lasting impacts contribute to an overall enhancement of artistic ability.

### **Creativity and Innovation**

An indicator of advanced artistic ability is the uniqueness of the work. Artists such as Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Georges Braque are renowned for transcending the norm and employing unheard techniques that made their art prominent. Psychedelics foster such creativity and have prompted artists to reject standards.

Dr. Janiger notes in a personal statement reflecting on his research,

The artists reported that in their LSD experiences they had gained the ability to generate original insights, fresh perspectives and novel, creative ways to express themselves through their art. One artist reported that he "broke the tyranny of form" (Janiger, 1999).

The vast size of Janiger's sample ultimately suggests that it is broadly experienced that LSD facilitates unique ideas in artists. The quote from one of the participants emphasizes that psychedelics encourage innovation and allow people to transcend stale notions of art that are imposed upon them. Increased innovation has not only been found in collective statements. An artist participating in research on creative problem solving with psychedelics had been hired to design a letterhead (Fadiman, 1966). All of his sketches were rejected until he created 26 sketches while using psychedelics (Fadiman, 1966). The artist was quoted to have said

After a couple of those I dismissed the original idea entirely, and started to approach the graphic problem radically differently. That's when things began to happen. All kinds of different possibilities began to come to mind... There was no fear, no worry, no sense of reputation and competition, no envy; none of these things which in varying degrees have always been present in my work (Fadiman, 1966).

James Fadiman, noted for his founding of the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (now Sofia University) is internationally recognized as an authority in psychology and is noted for his many publications, including his recent book, *The Psychedelic Explorer's Guide: Safe, Therapeutic, and Sacred Journeys*, nevertheless, his objectivity is questionable due to his history of use of

psychedelics (Fadiman, 2016). Psychedelics allow artists to exceed preconceived notions of art and internal barriers that obstruct their path to artistic success, thus they can create new approaches resulting in novel products. The artist's quote diagnoses the cause for this. Psychedelics release individuals from the pressures usually present when they create, such as concern for reputation, allowing their art to flow freely. Psychedelics allow individuals to focus on the actual creation of art, art for the sake of art, rather than focusing on the outcome and its implications, resulting in genuine creation.

Furthermore, Berlin noted that artists were less inhibited under the influence of psychedelics. They created in a "loose free way" that was evident in "size, freedom of line and brilliance of colors employed in their paintings" (Berlin, 1955). One artist explains her approach while under the influence of mescaline as being "indirect and tentative with many changes" and felt "relaxed about the mistakes in drawing" (Berlin, 1955). The inhibiting effects of societal pressure to conform to a standard of art is forgone with the use of psychedelics and the burden to create art that will be received well dwindles, consequently giving rise to freedom in the artistic process. Expression trumps attention to detail and exploration of new ideas and techniques is prompted, thus, passion becomes apparent and unique works of enhanced aesthetic value are achieved. This is further supported by an interview with Dr. Janiger by Doblin during which he explains his personal reaction to LSD and how it freed his conscious.

I've opened the door to some other extension of my mind, or my sensory equipment or perceptual apparatus... That gave me access to a kind of world that was vastly enlarged, vastly expanded. My senses were made most acute. My mental capacity led me to think in terms of breaking away from familiar...reality (Doblin, 1999).

Rick Doblin received a Harvard education and has a staunch reputation, noted as one of the first certified Holotropic Breathwork practitioners and his extensive experience in conducting follow up research on past studies, yet, as the Founder and Executive Director of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies he is partial to the subject (Staff, 2016). The expansion of perception noted in this comment reveals how LSD functions to allow individuals, specifically artists, access to new notions to explore, effectively liberating them from conceptual ruts. The mention of breaking from reality coincides with previous statements, signifying that psychedelics free artists from the preconceived structure of what art is. In this way, psychedelic use can cause artists work to stand out from the work of their times.

Nonetheless, a contrary opinion rises from a Visionary artist. The Visionary movement focuses on the depiction of hallucinations and is largely, though not solely, influenced by psychedelics (Caruana, 2016). Caruana is a prominent member of this movement and wrote the "Manifesto of Visionary Art" in which he states,

as precise a rendering as possible is absolutely necessary for vision-inducing works. Fine lines, gradual transitions, infinite details — there is no limit to the pains endured nor the patience required to successfully render a vision into image form (Caruana, 2001).

This quote is particularly interesting as it comes from an advocate of the use of psychedelics in the creation of art, thus adding weight to the evidence as Caruana opposes the partiality he is expected to have. Accentuated by this quote is the challenge of translating hallucinations to

paper. For it to be achieved, a substantial foundation and mastery of technical abilities must already exist. Only with existing refined technique that few can achieve will psychedelics augment artistic talent.

### **Perception and Technical Skills**

Psychedelics have a powerful effect on perception, wildly distorting it, thus it is necessary to assess these impacts to judge artistic ability. In a 2015 study, a globally renowned researcher, currently stationed at the Netherlands Institute for Neuroscience, Enzo Tagliazucchi reveals the effect LSD has on perception (Taliasucchi, 2017). The findings indicate that LSD not only provokes an increase of activity in regions of the brain involved with sensory areas and how one interprets their environment, but it also alters the path of visual information, causing one to see the internal functioning of their brain, thus inducing hallucinations (Tagliazucchi, 2015). This study is particularly important as it is so recent, allowing the use of advanced scientific technology to map the impact of LSD on the brain, thus providing insight to the distortion of perception (Tagliazucchi, 2015).

The alteration of perception impacts technical skills. This is made clear in Dr. Janiger's research, in which the experience of one artist is explained in detail. The subject makes several comments on perception in relation to his ability to draw. After 2 hours and 30 minutes he states, "Outlines seem normal, but very vivid everything is changing color. My hand must follow the bold sweep of the lines" (Janiger, 1989). After 4 hours and 25 minutes he comments "This will be the best drawing, like the first one, only better. If I'm not careful I'll lose control of my movements, but I won't, because I know, I know" (Janiger, 1989). After 8 hours the effects have worn off and the subject draws one last portrait, stating "I have nothing to say about this last drawing. It is bad and uninteresting" (Janiger, 1989). It can be derived from this description that the perceptual changes experienced by an artist under the influence of LSD are in favor of the artwork. While a struggle to control skill is apparent, the work produced during the experience is considered to be of higher quality than that from after. The artist's satisfaction in his work produced during the effect of LSD indicates an advantage of skewed perception. It allows for unparalleled creation, thus enhancing artistic ability. Janiger further supports this in a personal statement,

I found that there was a substantial learning curve and that artists gradually become more adept working under the influence of LSD. The artists somehow found a way to draw inspiration from the LSD state for the creation of art and were able to increasingly control the physical expression of their subjective vision. The artists who were most able to represent in their art their subjective LSD experiences were those who had most developed their technical abilities (Janiger, 1999).

The difficulty of transcribing hallucination inspired visions to canvas is not debilitating, rather, it can be overcome with experience. Artistic technique is not solely innate and practice is fundamental to any artist to master their skills. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that exercising creation during the effect of psychedelics is necessary to hone these abilities. Increased command of skills is possible, thus, enhancing artistic capacity.

Additionally, in the case study of Crumb it was found that following an intense experience that he calls his "fuzzy acid" trip, the use of perceptual alteration increased between

1965 and 1967 by 15 points, the largest difference of scores noted (Jones, 2007). What Crumb perceived while using psychedelics served as a great inspiration for his art, even changing the techniques he used. The skewed perception led to an elevation of artistic proficiency that allowed Crumb to transfer psychedelic inspiration to his art.

Contrariwise, many have found that psychedelics distort perception and obstruct mechanical control so heavily that creating art is impossible. In an interview, Victor Moscoso, renowned psychedelic artist, responds to questions about his experience with LSD,

I took LSD, but you can't draw on LSD. People ask me, "Did you draw on acid?" Draw on acid? That's like drawing while you're tumbling down a flight of stairs. Are you kidding? With you dying and being re-born, having an understanding of the molecular structure of your body and of the cosmos at the same time. Drawing is absurd. You can't do it! Whatever you draw will not come close to what you can see, or perceive. Words cannot describe an acid trip. I took acid, but I certainly wouldn't draw under it (Groth, 2011).

Moscoso's adamant refusal to drawing under the influence of LSD highlights the obstructive effect of psychedelics on technical skills. Heightened senses flood ones environment as hallucinations capture and consume their attention. The overwhelming nature of this experience is so encompassing that producing artwork seems preposterous. Furthermore, Berlin's use of the Bender-Gestalt test lead to the conclusion that LSD and mescaline cause "impairment of the highest integrative functions" and "indifference to careful spacing" (Berlin, 1955). When analyzing his subjects through the draw a person test, he notes "an indifference to detail, and he drew a simple, crude, bizarre figure, unlike the man drawn when the artist was in the normal state" (Berlin, 1955). Exemplified by this is the hindering effect psychedelics have on ones ability to incorporate their intent and motor control in order to create art. A regress in basic technical aptitude, such as understanding of space and proportion, is apparent as the artists' ability to reproduce their sketches from before the introduction of the drug is severely hampered. Discrepancy in technique before and during the experience supports the notion that psychedelics do not enhance artistic ability. This is also revealed in Dr. Jiří Roubíček's 1961 book *Experimentální Psychosy* (Experimental Psychoses) in which research research in Prague 1952 and 1960 at the Psychiatric Clinic of Charles University, Czechoslovakia is described painting (Roubíček, 1961). Subjects who were administered mescaline and LSD were noted to

often attempt to depict the dynamisms of abruptly alternating visions...their manual speed and available drawing space are sometimes not equal to the flood of dazzling perceptive changes." Also mentioned is "the immediacy and directness of the creative product. If a certain regression may be inferred it is one to archetypal levels, to the fundamental features of painting (Roubíček, 1961).

Jiří Roubíček is an author whose works have been seen in many renowned publications in German and Czech, gaining him worldwide status as an expert in psychological research, contrariwise, due to language barriers many of his credentials remain unknown, thus bringing his credibility into question (Roubíček, Jiří, 2010). The illusive nature of hallucinations prevents individuals from being able to convey them. This is further hindered as the use of psychedelics strips the stress and strive for psychical accuracy, resulting in a significant deterioration of mechanical ability. Discrepancies between intentionality of work and the actual product were

also noted in a 1952 study of hallucinogens by Lászlo Mátéfi (Stuart, 2004). Mátéfi quotes the subject,

I see the object correctly but draw it falsely; my hands won't follow it.... I have the need to bring everything including the painted picture into the surface of the image. Had the painting process been more of a technical success, I would have been able to produce a fantastically good work (Stuart, 2004).

The altered perception induced by psychedelics hinders artistic ability as one's technical skills limit their ability to bring the complexity of the conceptual into fruition. Hallucinations are incredibly difficult to transcribe into art; thus the product fails to satisfy the original intent. Psychedelics uproot one's basic technical foundation and command over motor functions is diminished, ultimately illustrating that psychedelics do not improve artistic ability.

### **Aesthetic Quality**

A pivotal determinant of artistic ability is aesthetic quality of the artwork. Aesthetic "refers to those principles governing the nature and appreciation of beauty, especially in visual art" (Aesthetics, 2017).

Berlin's research lead him to conclude that people under the influence of LSD produced works of greater esthetic value appeal according to the panel of fellow artists, but this was associated with a relaxation of control in the execution of lines and employment of color, so that both color and line were freer and bolder (Berlin, 1955).

Also noted was an increased awareness of "dead areas and dull colors" in the canvas (Berlin, 1955). Artists experience a freedom due to psychedelics that is mirrored in their artwork. As use of line and color becomes more sporadic, the composition becomes more interesting and vivid. The artist notes negative space in their canvas and is more disposed to fill them, effectively increasing the aesthetic quality.

In Dr. Janiger's study, the work of one subject is frequently noted as it depicts a drastic shift in style while under the influence of LSD. Images of these drawing were included and the following features are apparent. Before taking the LSD the artist drew a portrait of Dr. Janiger that was extremely realistic and indicated fine attention to value rendering (Janiger, 1989). The image was small and left large expanses of negative space. The work then becomes distorted with lines jutting from the figure as detail regresses, yet, rendering is still apparent (Janiger, 1989). Two hours into the experience, the portrait encompasses the entire composition beginning at the forehead and ending just below the chin and detail and value rendering is almost completely abandoned as contour lines form the image but proportional accuracy exists (Janiger, 1989). Thirty minutes later a new portrait has the same compositional structure as before but sporadic lines form the face and features become somewhat indistinguishable (Janiger, 1989). A shift to an expressionist style is noted. The next portrait contains the same features but is somewhat cartoonish (Janiger, 1989). The most dramatic shift is seen 15 minutes later as the portrait becomes completely abstract and the artist changes mediums from graphite to Tempera paint (Janiger, 1989). Virtually the entire page is filled with lines that vary in width creating texture and no face is distinguishable, resembling a mass of color and erratic brush strokes

(Janiger, 1989). After two hours of inactivity, the artist completes a portrait in water color and ink, relying on contour lines to compose the face (Janiger, 1989). The image is no longer fill-frame, however, the face is enveloped in flowing lines resulting in a simplistic yet imaginative piece (Janiger, 1989). After another hour the subject returns to graphite and swirling lines emerge from the face and much more negative space is left, resembling the earlier work (Janiger, 1989). Finally, as the effects have worn off, the artist's portrait returns to its original style (Janiger, 1989). The artists' style undergoes drastic stylistic changes, shifting from stale, realistic renditions to imaginative and interesting depictions. The use of composition is a key factor. While influenced by LSD little negative space is left, thus producing a more holistically aesthetically pleasing image.

The Crumb case study reveals lasting effects of this nature. Crumb explains that when he quit drugs, "I started to get more serious about drawing again and more interested in technical aspects of drawing" (Jones, 2007). Interestingly, the use of expansion, boundary loss, intensity, fragmentation and distortion (perceptual alteration techniques) saw the largest concentration in 1977 and 1978, two years after Crumb stopped using drugs (Jones, 2007). The increased use of perceptual alteration techniques reveals an enduring effect of LSD. The use of such techniques initially was seen when Crumb first tried LSD; this indicates that Crumb has incorporated the fluidity of consciousness produced by LSD with his noted improvement of mechanical skills. By melding these aspects of art, aesthetic quality is enhanced significantly.

Nonetheless a contrary effect has been experienced. Barron's research left one artist entirely dissatisfied with his art. Barron quotes the participant,

I seemed to become unusually aware of detail and also unusually unconscious of the relationship of the various parts of the drawing. My concern was with the immediate and what had preceded a particular mark on the page or what was to follow seemed quite irrelevant. When I finished a drawing I tossed it aside with a feeling of totally abandoning it (Barron, 1964).

The experience of this artist reveals a disjointing effect that psilocybin has on one's art. By focusing only on individual aspects of a piece, the holistic composition suffers as it becomes disconnected and unrelated. The same factors that improve aesthetic quality in the previous sources cause it to suffer for this artist. The effects of psychedelics are dependent on the individual, yet, the majority of findings indicate an increase of aesthetic quality, thus enhancing artistic ability.

### **Final Analysis**

It is clear that this topic is an intricate one when considering the four components: Motivation to Produce, Creativity and Innovation, Perception and Technical Skills, and Aesthetic Quality. Much of the research indicates that the effect psychedelics have on artistic ability drastically varies by individual. Desire to create increases after the experience only, while during, individuals lack motivation due to the sensational flood of a wildly altered environment. Those who do create, must have a clear goal and strong drive to do so already. They must also be able to control their techniques and have an established mastery of such. The shift in perception

is beneficial to enhancing artistic ability. The new view of one's world that psychedelics induce contributes to innovation of artists. Hallucinations provide artists with novel notions that further the uniqueness of their artwork, allowing them to emerge from the mundane and static standards of art of their time and propelling them to the front stage of the art scene. Artists note a newfound freedom from a need to produce something that will be received well, rather, they can focus on the joy of producing art, resulting in genuine creation that notably enhances the quality of their art. Even with this, however, shifts in perception make creating art difficult. Translating their visions to paper is extremely difficult during the experience as their vision whirls and integrative functions are hindered, even holding a pencil was noted as difficult. This regress in technical ability, however, can have positive effects upon one's artwork. A shift occurs, from technical detail to flowing expression marking an escalation in the aesthetic quality of the artwork. The use of composition increases as the canvas is filled and individuals have greater awareness of negative space and flat areas. Subdued colors are traded for vibrant ones and fine detail lines are traded for bold expansive ones. Psychedelics have limited use to artistic ability while one is actually using them as they seriously hinder one's foundation of basic art techniques and have a lackadaisical effect on drive to create, nonetheless, the persisting impacts are valuable. Ultimately, psychedelics enhance artistic ability as they leave artists with an enduring desire to create, expand their cognitive horizons leading to innovation, and influence stylistic changes that mark an elevation in aesthetic quality.

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