

Student 4: High Achieved

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Full Fathom Five is painted with oil on canvas as well as with nails, buttons, tacks, key, coins, cigarettes, matches and more. It is one of the first painting that Pollock had completed where he used the drip and pour technique. Pollock was known for his original abstract art and therefore his works were of great popularity as the techniques were adopted and idealised by Pollock himself. **These**

**techniques were used to symbolise Pollock's paintings (the paint splatters, dripping and pouring paint and his style of performance art).** As the critic Harold Rosenberg said 'Pollock had re-imagined the canvas not a space in which to reproduce, re-design, analyse or 'express' an object [but as] an arena in which to act' interpreting Pollock's balletic moves around the canvas as a species of performance art, **because of this originality Pollock was one of the most famous symbols of abstract expression** and an "embodiment" of critics and historians of American modernism in its finest hour.

**Pollock's series of works such as Full Fathom Five which is one among his collection of his drip and pour paintings is an example of his style of 'action painting' – Harold Rosenberg, which included lots of colour a contrast between natural and unnatural, range of tones and personal emotion and violence to convey personal commentary or inner life through art.**

Pollock's influences on his works, the media and processes he uses are the scale of Monet, the stylistic and material experiments of Picasso and Braque and the exploitation of 'automatic' procedures by surrealist painters like Joan Miro [2]. Hence the media he used for the painting Full fathom Five such as oil on canvas, nails, tacks, coins, cigarettes etc. were influenced by the modern artists like Picasso and Braque, for example how Picasso used etching, engraving burins, newspapers, rubber cement, pottery and collage as a part of cubism. These medias were used to create an active surface, creating texture and depth. The method of origin of the drip and pour technique was said to be a 'creative accident' [2] and yet played a significant part in Pollock's success in his works of abstract expression. The process that Pollock used to create these effects on this painting was using a long paint brush with oil paint (close to liquid state) and dripping as well as pouring on to the canvas which was laid flat on the ground, this was the same method also with splattering the paint (liquid state. Oil paint mixed with turpentine) on to the canvas creating thick plus thin lines and curves on the canvas. Although the darks of the painting create a subtle feel and the matches, cigarettes, key and tacks embedded into the painting are almost invisible, the contrast in colours and tones adds emphasis to the painting creating a sense of space. These techniques of not letting the brush touch the canvas and the painterly effects show that the painting is non-mechanical and this is also suggested by repeating these techniques throughout many of his later paintings. Through his series of paintings we see that the scale in which he is painting in is also increasing therefore this suggests he is trying to maximise his space to try to attract interpretation and self-reflection. Pollock controls the amount of paint poured and splattered by his body gestures such as his body rhythm and his wrist, arm and shoulder movement **which is a species of performance art that was seen symbolically**

especially in Pollock's words. This had been Pollock's original motive as he said "They [modern painters] work from within...in other words – expressing the energy, the motion and the other inner forces" – Pollock. Which the writers had noticed in Pollock's paintings – "The painting recorded the energies and states of the man who drew it" – Werner Haftman. These quotes show that with this motive Pollock used his paintings to create a new era of abstraction art and he has done so as he is still a famous symbol of abstract expression even today. "the influences on Pollock's visual style and method have been the subject of much debate and controversy" [2] (Jackson Pollock, 1941-60, p126) however during the abstraction period he was a great influence to later artists who developed colour field painting soon after evolving the idea of abstract expression.

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