

Per Fronth: Don't Give Up on Modern Art

By Sofya Levina on May 3, 2012



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Modern art has many faces. From one perspective, it is all art created in the 21st century, with overtly simplistic pieces comprised of one paint splatter of brown on a background of green. No matter how much you want to dismiss this style of expression as “bad art,” art is objective, and you have to look at it through unbiased goggles. However, one way in which you can distinguish between different artists is through skill level. Although many aging intellectuals have given this century the gloomy prognosis that this is the death of creativity, originality, and craftsmanship, that’s only because every generation wished it could be the last. After all, no one ever remembers who came in second place.

For a long time, the MFA in Boston exhibited a large collection of Ellsworth Kelly’s “wooden sculptures.” I put this in quotations because calling them sculptures is a bit of an overstatement. If you have ever had to put together a wooden armoire from Ikea, then you may as well have used Kelly’s wooden designs. However, these planks of wood cut into basic shapes adorned the walls of the MFA, and who am I to say it’s not art.