

# ART AND ITS CYCLIC NATURE

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The specialty of art lies in its ability to flawlessly express itself while manipulating innumerable forms of illustrations and incarnations that have echoed through generations and significantly evolved at each turn. Paintings, sculptures, music and language – all of these forms have been known to embody the essence of our imagination. Corresponding to that, art has remained fluid and ever changing in its motion whilst adorning centuries with the evolution of our minds.

Except that, our mind seems to be travelling around the spectrum in a cyclic pattern!

Stemming from realism, art transitioned to surrealism until it finally entered the era of abstract. The contrasting themes of art created throughout different time periods only enunciate the distinct patterns that it has followed through time. The establishment of this cyclic nature brings us to the main question, on which we can only speculate – “Why does art follow this cycle?”

Realism refers to the form of art where it is the general attempt to represent subject matter truthfully, without artificiality, avoiding speculative fiction and supernatural elements. Realism can be seen integrated into various works, whether they are paintings or sculptures, prevalent from the ancient times to the early Renaissance period. This strict adherence to portraying only the life around us was likely rooted from an unyielding environment, where living on to see the next dawn was not guaranteed.

Fear of being eaten alive by bears is hardly a recipe for creative inspiration.

However, with the bears restricted to forests, and the new brewing civilisation, humanity prospered with improved living standards and freedom. This allowed imagination in forms that had never before been observed, leading to the style of art ubiquitous during the 20th century – surrealism, which incorporated elements of realism mixed in with abstract. Sadly, the Greeks were left behind as artists delved into newer and bolder art forms. Thus, humanity began its journey towards perceiving more than what meets the eye.

Some might say we have reached the zenith of civilisation. The fear of feral animals is now replaced with the looming dread of the no-internet dinosaur. This significantly enhanced lifestyle and over a millennia of progress means that imagination can soar through the roof and enable us to create completely abstract and illusory ideas. After centuries of trials and experimentations, art has finally reached a distinct place when it comes to self-expression. However, is it really the end of this cycle?

Evolution is a continuous process, and so art will invariably metamorphose with the passage of time. We might witness art devolve into the ideals of old, with realism making a grand comeback as a victim of technology’s habit of constructive destruction. Alternatively, art might continue its seemingly perpetual pursuit of abstractionism and infinitude, and bring about yet another unforeseen revolution transcending the limits of our imagination.



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## What’s Your Gateway Instrument to Music?

**SABIH SAFWAT**

It is common to feel lost while trying to decide which instrument to choose to delve into the world of music with. Here are some of the common choices for beginners, along with the pros and cons to help you make the decision.

The guitar is probably the most popular choice. It’s one of the most versatile instruments available, fit for both a solo performance or as an accompaniment to vocal singing. While it may not be the best option to learn music theory with, it does have a multitude of playstyles and is very mobile.

Many take to keyboards as its layout is really nice to figure out melodies and harmonies. The wonderful seven-octave range makes playing both the bass and treble sections possible at the same time. Best of all, electronic keys come with dozens of different instruments’ sample sounds to choose from. However, it is not exactly travel friendly, and requires either an electric outlet or batteries to be set up, unlike the guitar.

Drums are the rhythm drivers for a wide range of genres, and the prospect of being the one leading the grooves is nothing short of attractive. Unfortunately, one



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of the downsides one may experience is missing out on the melodic side of music, but a full set of drums bring with them great opportunities to explore various sides of music. If this is your choice, be prepared for emptied wallets and half a room worth of space gone.

Casual players often go for the ukulele. Its bright tone works nice as an accompanying instrument for certain genres of music like folk or pop, but at the cost of an empty bass range. The chord shapes are quite simple and the nylon strings are easy on the finger, so the instrument is

also perfect for younger music enthusiasts.

Flutes, while a monophonic instrument, have more presence in comparison. The rich timbre of the instrument draws in aspiring soloists. Flutes require one to learn extensive breathing techniques and control in addition to fingering, so the learning curve is a bit steep. But its exceptional ability to add emotion to melodies, makes the pain of learning it worth it.

The harmonium is preferred by classical music learners. While it’s good as a lead instrument, the tone of the harmonium often does not go well with a lot of popular music genres, leading to its declining popularity. It remains one of the best instruments to supplement vocal exercises due to its lasting sustain though.

There’s a running joke that people pick up a bass guitar when they aren’t good enough to play the good old six strings, which unfortunately has some amount of truth to it. The rest, however, just feel that the standard guitar sounds weak and needs something thicker, with more of a bite to it.

*Sabih Safwat has tried half a dozen instruments and failed to get good at any of them. Remind him to get some practice done at [sabihsafwat@gmail.com](mailto:sabihsafwat@gmail.com)*