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# Decorative Effect in the Solution of Children's Drawings on Historical Topics

*Efecto decorativo en la solución de dibujos infantiles sobre temas históricos*

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### RESUMEN

El artículo analiza dibujos decorativos enviados al Concurso de Dibujo de toda Rusia entre estudiantes de organizaciones de educación general por el 500 aniversario del Tula Kremlin (Tula, Rusia) sobre el tema "Tula Kremlin es el orgullo de Rusia". La relevancia de estudiar la solución decorativa de los dibujos infantiles está asociada con el hecho de que el dibujo decorativo refleja más plenamente el deseo del niño de expresar su actitud emocional ante la realidad. El artículo analiza el efecto decorativo de los dibujos infantiles en temas históricos; clasifica dibujos competitivos; considera técnicas artísticas que ayudan a dirigir la búsqueda creativa de un estudiante en el camino del desarrollo artístico emocional

**Palabras clave:** Arte medieval, arte visual, visualización, aprendizaje visual

### ABSTRACT

The article analyzes decorative drawings sent to the All-Russian Drawing Competition among students of general education organizations for the 500th anniversary of the Tula Kremlin (Tula, Russia) on the topic "Tula Kremlin is the pride of Russia". The relevance of studying the decorative solution of children's drawings is associated with the fact that decorative drawing most fully reflects the child's desire to express their emotional attitude to reality. The article analyzes the decorative effect of children's drawings on historical themes; classifies competitive drawings; considers artistic techniques that help to direct the creative search of a student on the path of emotional artistic development

**Keywords:** Medieval art, visual arts, visualization, visual learning

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## INTRODUCTION

The Tula Kremlin has been the epicenter of the formation and development of a special cultural space in the southern part of Russia for 500 years. The cultural space of the Tula Kremlin is much larger than the area enclosed by the Kremlin wall. The Tula Kremlin has served as a powerful defensive structure of the Zasechnaya cherta in different historical periods, as a center of Orthodox culture, and as an architectural monument. Unique productions (Tula samovar, Tula pryanik, Tula harmonica, Tula weapons) appeared around the Tula Kremlin.

Participating in the All-Russian Drawing Competition "Tula Kremlin is the pride of Russia" (hereinafter – the Competition), students turn to the history of the Tula land, get acquainted with works of art of different types and genres that reflect different historical epochs, and begin to master the set of values that man created on the Tula land, i.e. its artistic culture.

L.P. Pechko, in defining the paramount task of teachers of artistic and aesthetic education, indicates that students need to discover "the true aesthetic values of nature, art, the surrounding cultural material environment, a harmonious lifestyle and the ideal of cultural relations of a person to the world" (Pechko: 2003, p. 188). The Competition is aimed at revealing these aesthetic values and mastering them.

The interest of students in painting can be explained by the fact that it is an intuitive, accessible, and beloved form of fine art. Working on the expressiveness of the pictorial image, interest in mixing colors, searching for new shades, identifying and mastering the techniques of painting – this is a very exciting creative process for novice artists.

Decorative painting – easel or monumental – is most often present in the human environment. Decorative painting has always occupied one of the leading places in Russian national culture. The murals of the Hermitage and Pavlovsk, Kuskovo, and Ostankino testify to the high culture of decorative painting in Russia in the 18th – early 20th centuries. In the interior, the decorative painting was located in the painting of plafonds, walls, panels, and pictures (Lukyanov: 1988).

The decorative effect is "a set of artistic properties that enhance the emotional-expressive and artistic-organizing role of plastic works of art in the object environment surrounding a person" (Polevoi: 1986, p. 123). Indeed, the decorative solution of a pictorial composition is used where it is necessary to create the most emotional artistic image. By enhancing the expressiveness of the spot, the active stroke line, color harmonies, they achieve the greatest expressiveness of the artistic image.

The decorative effect is an integral feature of applied art, which requires special image techniques, such as simplifying or complicating the form, working with a silhouette, line, or spot. The artist sometimes purposefully changes the proportions or scale of the objects depicted, revealing the most significant in the artistic image. A.V. Bakushinsky noted that the decorative effect is explained by "the search for a new expression of the connection between art and the artist, the artist, and the world, a new expression of this connection in art" (Bakushinskii: 1981, p. 46).

The decorative effect opens up wide opportunities for students to search for new compositional, constructive, and pictorial opportunities. The decorative solution in children's drawing helps to avoid the dry development of promising drawing, which is not interesting for children, especially younger students, and also helps to minimize the rational nature of the image and direct creativity to the path of emotional artistic development. The decorative drawing, as a creative process, directs the child to the search for the most expressive imaginative artistic solutions. A decorative approach to drawing helps to preserve the spontaneity of children's creativity.

Taking part in the Competition, the child reveals to the viewer what they feel – how beautiful and complex the samovar is, how unusual the Tula pryanik is, and how unique the architecture of the Tula Kremlin is. The very nature of decorative drawing offers the student many creative possibilities to circumvent the complexity of the image of any design, but at the same time convey the emotionality of their perception. A child needs to

master art through experience, the development of various artistic "trial" techniques, and attempts to master the language of visual art must necessarily be accompanied by positive emotions (Anisimov: 2014).

Thus, the relevance of the study of the decorative effect in solving children's drawings is that decorative painting most fully reflects the child's desire to express their emotional attitude to reality.

The purpose of the research: an analysis of the decorative effect in solving children's drawings on historical subjects (based on the materials of the All-Russian Drawing Competition "Tula Kremlin is the pride of Russia").

Research hypothesis: decorative drawing allows the child to focus on the main issues – learning to feel and convey emotions through painting.

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the goal set in the study was achieved.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodological basis of the study was:

- concepts of scientists dedicated to the features of children's creativity (Vygotsky: 1991; Vysotskaya: 2003; Prentice: 2000; Einarsdottir et al.: 2009; Zimmerman: 2009);
  - theoretical works on the theory and methodology of teaching fine arts (Fomina: 2014; Savenkova: 2018; Prater: 2001; Shreeve et al.: 2010; Chang et al.: 2012);
  - theoretical provisions on the influence of art on the worldview of a modern student, their creative development and the formation of an aesthetic attitude to the surrounding reality (Sevryukova: 2019; Koptseva: 2016; Edwards, Nabors: 1993; Torshilova, Poloshukhina: 2016; Akishina: 2017).
- To carry out the analysis of the decorative effect in solving children's drawings on historical subjects, decorative compositions of the creative works of the Competition were divided into the following images:
- drawings of individual items – works of decorative and applied art and souvenirs (Tula pryanik, samovars, toys, etc.);
  - still lifes – compositions from traditional for Tula works of decorative art;
  - images of the interior – at the same time, the architectural sights of the Tula Kremlin are its integral part (window views, paintings, etc.);
  - architectural landscapes – general views of the Tula Kremlin, images of individual towers and walls.

## **RESULTS**

Let us consider the competitive works of students, based on the proposed classification

### **1. Drawings of individual items**

Undoubtedly, students who sent drawings of the Tula pryanik to the Competition turned to history and to the technology for making the printed Tula pryanik. They learned that the printed pryanik is called so since its shape and decor were printed simultaneously with a specially carved wooden form. The pryanik itself is not only a culinary product made of dough, seasoned with honey and spicy additives and decorated with glaze, but also a work of traditional decorative and applied art of the Tula land.

The shape of Tula pryanik is simple and solid, it can be geometric (rectangular, oval, etc., with or without festoons) or in the form of animal figures. A characteristic feature of the composition of the Tula pryanik is the inscription "Tula pryanik", "Tula", "Souvenir", etc. In their drawings, the children reflected a rich assortment of forms of Tula printed pryanik – images of fish, birds, and animals – which the authors of the drawings decorate

with a pattern or conditional images of feathers, scales, fur. Girls of primary school age chose drawings of Tula pryanik, which are decorated with flowers and leaves.

The drawing of a rectangular Tula pryanik, author Aidana Ersarina (6 y/o, Orenburg region). The inscription "Tula pryanik" is in the center of the pryanik pattern. Flowers of rounded shape with pronounced middle and lanceolate leaves are along the perimeter. The desire to perfectly depict a symmetrical pattern of flowers and leaves is not yet possible. The author's approach to solving the color of pryanik gives the decorative effect to the work, which imitates a light brown surface with glaze from white glaze, which is achieved by mixing the paint with horizontal strokes directly on the sheet surface. For this, shades of white, ocher, and golden colors were selected. The 6-year-old child successfully copes with a difficult task to circle carefully the edge of the pryanik and the details of its pattern.

The oval-shaped pryanik decorated with scallops was painted by Yana Myasnikova (6 y/o, Ulyanovsk Region, Barysh). A flower is in the center of the pryanik, with lush leaves and curls of different sizes, downward directed. The author tries to make a symmetrical pattern. The shape of the leaves is elegant, lanceolate, or carved at the edge. The author paid attention to the decorative meaning of leaves – highlighted the central part in the form of a fork or indicates the central vein of the leaf. The decorative effect gives pattern the use of stroke lines of different thicknesses of flowers and leaves.

Take the drawings depicting a horse-shaped pryanik (authors Maxim Gerasimov, 7 y/o, Barnaul; Samir Musin, 7 y/o, Republic of Tatarstan, Kazan). The pryanik figures are depicted in the form of a children's toy rocking horse. These works are different in decor, but similar in silhouette and shape. The difference is present in the interpretation of the horse image: it can have a shaggy mane and a matted tail, or a wavy mane and tail, neatly combed, plaited cunningly. There are horses "in apples" among the works sent to the Competition – with decorative circles loosely scattered over the cereal or with the decor in the form of circles, which are grouped into an ornament in the form of strict triangles.

Thus, it may be concluded that the drawings with the image of the Tula pryanik were made mainly by children studying in primary school. Using decorative techniques at an affordable level for their age, they showed their ability to identify the beauty of the pryanik pattern using lines and color spots and generalize the shape. The student reflected their aesthetic attitude to this work of folk craftsmen, traditional for the Tula region in the decorative solution of the drawings.

Tula is not only the birthplace of the samovar, but it has become its symbol. Let us analyze a work with the image of the Tula samovar, trying to figure out how children express their attitude to this ancient subject and to find out what is the decorative effect of the solution in compositions with the image of a samovar.

In the drawings, children depict the samovar as a symbol of family comfort, well-being, and prosperity. Students depict various forms of samovars – a cylinder, a pear, an inverted pear, a ball, a glass, a vase.

Architecturally, the samovar has a complex structure, many different detachable and non-removable parts of various configurations, its body is a simple smooth shape, and sometimes very complex, decorated with relief or painted patterns. It is not easy for students to portray this subject realistically. Children successfully master the conditional (decorative) image of a samovar, where some deviation from nature is possible. Moreover, each author of the drawing focuses on the degree of the decorative effect that most interests them, is most close to them: on the material from which the samovar is made; on the decor of the samovar-painted patterns; on all sorts of small details of the samovar – bails, taps, chimney, etc.

Maria Matushevich (7 y/o, Orenburg region, Yasny) was interested not only in the bright color of the golden samovar but also in its spherical shape. The glare on the sides and the cap of the samovar is arbitrary. The author does not focus on details – a modest nose, faucet, and bails. In this drawing, the author pays special attention to the shape of the samovar, trying to create an expressive tension of its contour line. The samovar stands on a blue tablecloth in a large square, which is drawn with thin lines. The dark blue fringe of the tablecloth accentuates the viewer's attention and adds the decorative effect to the drawing. It seems that the samovar with a tablecloth is floating in the blue space of the sky.

Valeria Shitova (Penza) pays attention to the samovar's decor – painted patterns with a sprig of strawberries (a motif characteristic of Khokhloma painting). However, the samovar is drawn without bails, with an expressive nose. The decorative effect in the solution of the drawing is created by the rhythm of colored spots – a cup with a saucer and a teapot.

Julia Enkova (7 y/o, Michurinsk) paints a samovar decoratively, like a vertical oval on a stand with bails and a nose. The bails are simple and rectangular. The blowing holes turn into a bright ornamental belt of small circles of different colors – red, orange, green. A teapot with a flower on its side shows off at the top. The samovar stands on a table of bright green color. The decorative effect is given to the drawing by a stroke with a thin black line.

## 2. Still lifes

A special group of works submitted for the competition includes still lifes, where the main role is often given to the image of the samovar

Ekaterina Lukyanenko (10 y/o, Leningrad region) painted an expressive decorative composition contrasting in color "At the Tula samovar". Two bright rectangles are in a dark room. Horizontal one – a bright rectangular checkered napkin and vertical – a window from which the upper part of the church with domes is visible against a light blue sky. The decorative effect is achieved by combining a profile image in one composition (a samovar with a chimney and a cup) and a top view (napkin, saucer, pryanik). The floor plane is marked with dark dark red paint, and the wall plane is dark-dark green. The colors are almost identical in tone and saturation. However, the dynamics of the composition are created by bright cells of blue, yellow, and red napkins. There is a samovar on the napkin. It is shaped like a vertical oval, with a skirt top and a bowl-shaped chimney. The profile image of the samovar's nose makes the samovar's silhouette more expressive. The work was done with markers.

Victoria Malygina (12 y/o, Zabaykalsky Krai) called her work "A Gift from Tula". The still life contains a samovar, cups, and a sugar bowl. They are decorated in the same style – large red flowers on a black background. Depending on the size of the product, the number of colors changes. There are three of them on a samovar, large, similar to blooming tulips, with a black stroke that separates the petals; on cups and sugar bowl – one at a time. The expressiveness of the work is achieved by using contrasting colors in the designation of the yellow table and the blue background of the wall. Pryanik with the inscription "A Gift from Tula" is placed in the foreground.

## 3. Interior

Let us consider the drawing "Symbols of Tula" by Maxim Egoshin (8 y/o, Yasny, Orenburg region). Samovar, cup, sugar bowl, three Tula pryaniks of different shapes are located on the windowsill. The river, the red wall, and the tower of the Tula Kremlin are outside the window. The shape of the samovar is similar to a vertically placed melon with characteristic dividing forms-festoons. There is a rectangular pryanik with the inscription "Tula" with the image of crossed guns in the foreground, another of the same shape, but with the inscription "Tula pryanik". The author drew another pryanik in the form of an expanded Tula harmonica, in the far corner of the windowsill. The decorative effect of this drawing is achieved by using the hatching of various directions to indicate a variety of surfaces. Horizontal hatching indicates a light brown table, wavy blue lines convey the ripples of the river; blue pencil strokes of different directions in the sky create the illusion of windy weather. The work is done with colored pencils. The author uses a contrasting contour outline of the shape of objects and individual details.

The theme of the image of the samovar in the interior was developed in the work "View from the window" by Timur Magyarov (9 y/o, Ulyanovsk region). The author concluded the composition between the wings – two curtains, conventionally designated by free wavy vertical lines. The result is a decorative drawing that resembles a theatrical setting. In the corner of the room; it is possible to see the entrance gate of the Tula Kremlin through the open window. A napkin, a samovar with a red kettle on top, and drying dishes are on the

windowsill. The author carefully drew an expressive silhouette of the carved back of the chair in the foreground. Behind the wide-open window – a view of the Tula Kremlin. The viewer's gaze penetrates the curtains, slides along the windowsill, lingers a little on the still life, and tries to see the expressive silhouette of the Kremlin buildings: the tower, the cathedral with golden domes, trees, and lawns in front of the window.

#### **4. Architectural landscapes**

The drawings sent to the competition show the interest of young artists in the variety of shapes and decor of the towers of the Tula Kremlin and the beauty of its walls. They also drew attention to the elegance of the Dormition and Epiphany cathedrals, the slender expressiveness of the bell tower. Students create interesting decorative compositions using these architectural motifs in their works.

Olesya Yurova (9 y/o, Moscow region) in a decorative drawing depicted a bright green lawn, along which the walls of the Tula Kremlin line diagonally. Illuminated by the sunset, the arches of the Kremlin wall are blazing with orange fire. The snow-white five-domed cathedral is depicted frontally, with a slight tilt. Drums of different widths crown the domes. The author is attentive to the correct arrangement of large and small domes and draws the large dome in the center and the small ones on the sides. Apses are indicated by vertical lines and arches. The decorative effect of the work solutions complements the picturesque approach to solving the sky. The author uses lake color, purple-ink, and dark blue paint for this purpose. The overall color of the work creates a festive, joyful mood. The author called it "My grandfather's homeland". Thus, the student not only drew an architectural ensemble but also tried to fix the ancestral memory of her family – she tried to convey the emotions and feelings that connect her with her closest relative, a respected and beloved grandfather through a decorative composition.

Let us consider the decorative composition "Pride of Tula" by Elizaveta Bolgova (7 y/o, Ulyanovsk region). The author painted a round pryanik with the inscription "Tula pryanik" in the foreground, on the lawn in the form of a flat green semicircle. The image of the main architectural attractions of the Tula Kremlin is in the balanced asymmetric composition. The Tula samovar and the Tula harmonica fit well in the upper corners of the drawing. The shades of ochre, brown paint, and pale blue tones that create an expressive color scheme of the picture were sparingly but expressively selected. The decorative effect is expressed in the conventional, without unnecessary details, the designation of the brickwork of the Kremlin walls, the silhouette solution of the bell tower, and the passage tower.

The decorative solution to the drawings shows how students cherish the historical heritage, mastering the aesthetics of the architectural complex of the Tula Kremlin.

#### **DISCUSSION**

According to the analysis of drawings, the competition participants send works made realistically, as well as works that show the decorative effect in the solutions to children's drawings. At the same time, not all students mastered the correct image of a prospective reduction in space when depicting an architectural composition, landscape, or everyday scene and could not expressively convey the volume and proportions of products in a still life. However, most of the competition participants were able to create a decorative composition.

Depending on the age, degree of development, health, and talent of students, such compositions have different degrees of expressiveness. Students successfully master the techniques of creating a decorative composition on the plane of the sheet – they use different techniques of applying paint, combine pictorial and graphic methods of drawing, and actively use the outline of a line of different colors and thicknesses. Participants of the Competition, as professional artists, think over the measure of the decorative effect of the depicted objects and embody it in a picturesque decorative drawing.

Let us analyze which methods of decorative images are used by the competitioners in their creative works.

Deformation – changing the shape in the drawing. This artistic technique is used to enhance the expressiveness of the image. Children sometimes use deformations in their works unconsciously: they draw as they see how the hand will behave. However, sometimes children use form deformation thoughtfully, especially if the work is done to fit the form into a certain contour.

The degree of detail is a meticulous study of small details in the image. Depending on the task in the drawing, the degree of detail can vary from fine detail to generalization of parts or refusal from them. One can judge the character of the young artist by the degree of detail. If they are diligent, accurate, observant, then their work is replete with various small details, features, patterns.

The choice of the optimal point of view – the frontal or profile image of objects is most often used in the decorative solution of the picture, they are guided by an expressive silhouette. For example, for drawing a samovar, the most expressive point of view is the one from which the profile of the nose and tap will be read (when turning the profile). This position of the nose of the samovar is the most advantageous – one can see its length, expressive silhouette, patterned solution of the tap.

Using different angles when depicting objects in one picture. Depending on the task, one can combine images with different angles in the decorative drawing

Plasticity is manifested in the unity, subtlety, and expressiveness of the form modeling, harmony of color solutions and tonal transitions, the harmony of the relationship of masses, silhouettes of forms and lines.

Thus, we see that the decorative solution of children's drawings fills them with additional meanings, increases the information content received by the audience from the images. Each picture appears on a piece of paper as a result of careful attention to nature. The decorative solution of the drawing allows developing the fantasy and imagination of the child and forming their idea of the harmony of color, line, and shape. Through drawing, the student approaches the study of the world, the nature of things, being charged with positive emotions and receiving aesthetic pleasure from classes. These emotions are very important (Hernández G. de Velazco et al.: 2019) for the child's harmonious development and feeling of happiness.

## **CONCLUSION**

The All-Russian Drawing Competition among students of general educational organizations for the 500th anniversary of the Tula Kremlin "Tula Kremlin is the pride of Russia" is aimed at developing an aesthetic attitude of the students towards the surrounding reality. Children's drawings reflect the age-specific nature of the perception of spiritual and moral values of the cultural development of Russia, which are indicators of the child's creative development in mastering the language of art. Creative works reflect the child's desire to convey their inner world, the desire to create a unique composition, which is typical for most authors of creative works. The analysis of the creative works of the participants of the All-Russian Competition showed that students for themselves determine the traditional values of spiritual culture; the ideas of love for the Motherland, patriotism, and responsibility for the present and future of Russia are reflected in the works.

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