

Art Appreciation Assignment 2

Contemporary Piece 1

Title: star cycle, 1976

Artist: Donald Laycock

1. This painting is easily identified by the title to be the cycle of stars. However, though the painting could be considered abstract, most people would be able to identify what the picture is of.
2. Although the main object in this picture is bright, the mood of the painting has an overall feeling of darkness. It has a desolate, dark mood because the majority of it is just blank grey. Which of course makes the brightness of the large star more powerful, however still overcome by its surroundings.
3. This person obviously appreciated the stars. He was inspired by their simplicity and yet amazing beauty. This the reason for him to make the painting abstract – he is making a statement about the simplest things being beautiful.
4. This is not mentioned...
5. This work is abstract-expressionism. Laycock manages to make his objects look realistic yet abstract: He tends to *set out* his paintings in an abstract manor, however his objects or focal points have a realistic quality in them. He was one of the first Australian painters to be influenced by American abstract-expressionism. He responded greatly to artists like Hans Hoffman and Mark Rothko. He admired their ability to create a firm and imposing image.
6. I think the artist's aim (like I mentioned in Q3) was to make a statement about the simplicity of nature and paint it in this same simple way!
7. This painting is black and white, if it was in colour it would defeat the artist's purpose: simplicity.

Contemporary Piece2

Title: Falling, 1976

Artist: Marie McMahon

1. The main subject of this picture is a little girl in a wedding dress.
2. The mood of the painting could easily be judged by the old fashioned drawing of the little child, however the Bold and Large lettering at the top contradicts her somewhat innocent ordinary figure, giving the painting an overall mood of irony. This contradiction of objects in the design makes it also quite sad.
3. The artist has been inspired by nothing. She is if anything the opposite of inspired, she is greatly distressed by oppression and wants to make a statement about it.
4. This is not mentioned.
5. It is a mixed media painting – designed to make a statement or deliver a message about the oppression of the church and of women. She has been influenced by other feminist artists.
6. The artist's aim was to make an obvious statement about the oppression by the catholic church and to women. This is obvious as she has taken text like "a child's first holy communion is like a rehearsal for marriage. On this occasion, the marriage is to the catholic church."

And also: "the immaculate deception" this written in neat text along the hem of the child's skirt, teasing Mary's unbelievable conception of Jesus in the bible.

The artist uses the child as a symbol – her small hands chained together with a bracelet while praying. She is *oppressed*. And the main text in the painting, the *title* of the painting: Falling. This word is also pasted across the child's skirt, designed in a way where it 'falls' into the word love. (this making a negative statement about love.)

The overall aim I think is to make a statement about the oppression of women and the oppression of the catholic church.

7. Again this picture is meant to make a socio –political statement about something negative and therefore is better off (in the artist's eyes) to be in bleak black and white.

Contemporary piece 3

Title: Untitled Expulsion of Eve, 1978

Artist: Warren Breninger

1. Judging from the title, Eve is the subject of this design. (she is the face!)
2. I guess the overall mood of this piece is mainly decided by the expression on Eve's face. She has the face of a child but an expression which could be on a witch or someone sinful and merciless. This makes the mood of the picture evil.
3. Again the picture does not capture something which the artist is inspired by particularly, rather it captures his concern, for something/someone he thinks is strange, abnormal or in this case evil.
4. The artist used this medium to redefine and extend the photographic issues as well as represent a person/place/thing. The person represented is still the main focus of the picture and there is an interesting textural pattern which could be classed as 'extending photographic issues' At the same time these patterns and scratches, (for example the scratch across Eve's face) not only adds interest to the overall design, but it also fits into the mood of the design. (The scratch on her face could be seen as a scar, which is again a symbol for the darkness of her personality: evil.)
5. This painting could be classed as mainly photography, however there is some mixed media in the background. He has used techniques like the burning of the edge of her face. Also again, the scratches on her neck and face.
6. I think the artist's aim was to explore photographic design, but at the same time have a subject and concept behind his artwork.
7. The main face in this design is in black and white, which of course is often a symbol for bleakness or negativity in paintings, though not in photography. However, the black and white of her face contrasts to the green of the background and therefore could be judged as if it were a painting. I think maybe that the artist's concept of Eve is derived from 'Adam and Eve' in the first testament of the bible where she betrays adam and disobeys God. The artist shows this evilness of Eve in the picture. Therefore the green in the picture could represent the garden of eden. (Garden's would usually be green.)

Contemporary piece 4

Title: The lids are dizzy pink, 1977

Author: Vicki Varvaressos

- 1.** The subject of this work isn't really one thing. It is split in half showing two different types of people. It is feminist art and the subject would be not one woman but two women! (A comparison of two different women.)
- 2.** The bottom half of the painting is a screaming woman, which shows how she has been oppressed and is now breaking free. In contrast however, the lady in the top half of the painting looks trapped and oppressed. Therefore like in question 1, the mood is split in half. It is a contrasting painting and therefore always has two sides. The mood of the top half you could call trapped or negative. However, the woman screaming at the bottom would be a positive statement and therefore the mood is victorious or triumphant.
- 3.** This person has been inspired by women's art and feminism. She was inspired to paint this artwork by other feminists who have expressed themselves through art. There are no particular artists mentioned. (who she is inspired by)
- 4.** This is not mentioned.
- 5.** This painting is expressionistic. It has all the elements of an expressionistic work: painting, portraying emotion rather than the external world. The artist has used thick and uneven brush strokes to show negative emotion around the oppressed woman. In comparison to this The woman who is not oppressed has less uneven and thick brush strokes around her showing that she has broken free from all that!
- 6.** The artist's aim was to make a contrasting statement about the women's movement in the 70s. She wanted to make the non-feminist individual look trapped and unfortunate. In comparison to feminist screaming and breaking free!
- 7.** The colour was turned into black and white for the art book.. Therefore I can't make statements about the colour because I don't know what colour things are!