

Georges Braque and Paul Cézanne Contrasting Essay

In Paul Cézanne's paintings – 'Still Life with Basket of Apples', that is mainly what is in the painting. A basket on its side half full with apples, a wine bottle standing beside it, apples scattered on the cloth and in the background a plate with what look like bread rolls or small baguettes, all of which are sitting on what looks like the kitchen table. The apples look like they have just been placed randomly on the table and in the basket and the bottle and bread look as though they have just been placed there to take up space in the painting. When I first looked at this painting the object that caught my eye first was the basket of apples. It is the largest object in the painting and is clustered with apples inside and around the basket. Also because of the name – 'Still Life with Basket of Apples', the main thing I would be expecting to see would be the basket and apples.

In Georges Braque's painting – 'Still Life with Glass and Newspaper' it is very different to Cézanne's Impressionist painting. In Braque's painting there are many different objects of different sizes and it is quite hard to make out what one object is actually meant to be. From the title you gather that there is hidden somewhere in the painting glasses and newspapers. The painting isn't that clear what is in it however, you can make out what looks like to be a newspaper headline. This was the first thing I noticed when I saw this painting. The newspaper headline painted in black and on a white background is very bold and stands out from everything else.

Cézanne was an Impressionist artist and painted objects quite realistic to an extent. He simplified his painting and did not add every little bit of detail into them. Cézanne was aware of the fact that the painter does not copy nature but tries to make a caricature of the subject. He painted what the eye saw and yet painted the structures of reality as understood by us humans. In this painting he used warm, autumn, rustic colours. The colours he used were not distinct, there were of many different shades. Cézanne used strong, violent and destructive subjects due to his depressive period in his life and used thick dark paint in many of his early work. He then changed his palette to lighter brighter colours. And responded to the lack of structure in Impressionists' paintings by improving his use of colours to portray his images as compositions of planes. We can clearly see from the use of warm, lighter and simple colours that he painted 'A Still Life with Baskets of Apples' after his depressive period when he discovered Impressionist painting. Cézanne's technique is very original and perfect in many ways. He handles every single brush stroke and carefully thinks about what colours and textures to give the painting and how to bring the canvas to life. Cézanne has his own incomparable quality that gives his masterpieces the strong continuous development, which gives the painting a unique quality that is outstanding and remarkable in every one of his masterpieces.

Georges Braque has a very different style and technique to Paul Cézanne. Even though many artists including Braque had been greatly influenced and advised on how an artist should treat nature and the style and techniques of painting by Paul Cézanne, Braque had taken a new direction into modern art. Braque wanted to search more than what the eye could see. He wanted to paint the structure of reality. With the help of Picasso, they created Cubism. In 'Still Life with Glass and Newspapers' Braque has used very dull, dreary and miserable colours. When I first looked at the painting because of the colours and the way the images in the painting were placed I

knew that there was something to do newspapers or magazines. In his other works he used strong, brilliant colours in a destructive way to create a sense of outburst. After the First World War Braque returned to the Cubistic movement and continued to develop and recreate different techniques to Cubism. He grasped an object in his painting and changed it to show a different view and instead of imagining, showed what could be achieved with an object. Rather than trying to make an exact copy of it, experimented with it and produced something that may look completely different from the really thing in some ways but an exact portrait in others.

In Cézanne's 'Still Life with Basket of Apples' the colours are not bright and are quite plain and simple, which gives off quite a dreamy and sombre mood. The atmosphere is not a happy one but not a sad one at that.

However I acquire from Georges Braque's painting a cruel, unpleasant mood due to the harsh uses of the dark tones and colours in the painting. Also the way he painted, his brush strokes seem quite ruthless. The atmosphere I get from the painting is that it's not too cheerful and happy but quite a busy and chaotic scene from a city. The way Braque has painted the dark straight lines and used quite big bold words to show the headlines doesn't seem to give off a joyful atmosphere but a cruel and vigorous atmosphere like in a city no one caring about anything or anyone but themselves.

Both paintings are very different and unique. Both painters have their own style and technique, which makes me like them in different ways. I like Cézanne's painting – 'A Still Life with Basket of Apples' as it is very simple, calming and quite relaxing to look at. However Braque's painting is very different his painting – 'A Still Life with Glass and Newspapers' is a busy and quite bold painting. It stands out and even though it is not colourful or bright it is a very interesting painting. When I look at barques painting it reminds me of a picture puzzle. You have to look at the different object sin the painting and try to figure out what each image represents. It's a fun painting even though it does look quite harsh and cruel. If I had to pick a favourite painting I would chose Braque's – 'A Still Life with Glass and Newspapers'