

I decided to base my project upon flowers. I chose this theme as I am interested in flowers and botanical things. I love all the bold, vibrant colours of flowers and their leaves. Also flowers come in all different shapes and sizes; their structure varies dramatically from flower to flower. I thought that I would be able to look at flowers in detail and produce some interesting artwork. Before I began this project I did some research into artists who painted flowers. I came across an artist by the name of Georgia O'Keeffe. She is very famous for the flower paintings which she did. I was inspired by her work. Georgia O'Keeffe usually fills the entire canvas with one or two blooms. These are painted in extreme close-up, which as a result the outer edges of the flower and stems are often cut off. The larger picture must be then completed in the viewers mind. Although O'Keeffe paints close up views of botanical work she lacks botanical detail because she is focusing on structure and colour. The close up angle allows a detailed examination of the individual structure of each flower. One of Georgia O'Keeffe's favourite subjects was the Calla Lily. This was because it is a flower with structural simplicity.

Two Calla Lilies on pink

It is not just the ambiguous patterning of the pink background echoing the organic structures of the flowers, which defies specific interpretation; the lighting within the picture and the modelling of the leaves also help complicate matters.

Georgia O'Keeffe's Poppy Paintings Oriental poppy

In this painting O'Keeffe has used two poppies to emphasise the depth of the flower in the background. The picture as a whole lacks structure because the background merges with the colour of the poppies.

Comparison of 'Oriental Poppy' and 'Poppies'

In the painting entitled 'Poppies' there is a contrast between the centre of the flower and the actual petal colours. This emphasises the structural detail of the flower. O'Keeffe has used very subtle colours in 'Poppies'. In 'Oriental poppy' the colours are vibrant and bold. In 'Poppies' the reproductive area of the flowers stand out more because of the use of subtle colour.

The White Calico Flower

This is a very subtle painting using very pale colours. The structure of the petals has been emphasised by the use of graduated colour and different shades. The stamens have been painted in white to give emphasis to their structure. Even the leaves and stem are painted in more detail. The pale green leaves in the background emphasise the calico flower's structure.

'White Iris' and 'Light Iris'

In both of these paintings O'Keefe has emphasised on the female reproductive organs of a plant. It is true that the reproductive organs of a plant resemble those of humans and this is clearly shown in these paintings and many more as in 'Two Calla Lilies in Pink'. This resembles the reproductive organs of a male.

The painting entitled 'White Iris' is a much more bland painting than 'Light Iris'. She focuses more on colour rather than structure in 'White Iris', unlike in 'Light Iris' where structure is the main focal point by the use of colour.

White Flower on Red Earth

This painting is of a simply structured flower. The structure has been heightened by the use of colour and yellow spike-like stamens especially where the petals overlap. The edge of each petal has been gradually darkened, the whole object outlined by the deep orange earth and the green leaves.

Black and Purple Petunias

O'Keefe has produced yet another painting of flowers, but using a completely opposite technique to that of the 'White Flower on Red Earth'. Here she has used lighter colours to emphasise both structure and background.

Apple Blossom

This is a multifloral work of art where the small flowers in the foreground have darkened slightly on the edges where they overlap flowers in the background. These have slightly blurred where they meet the blue sky. This gives a sense of distance in the picture.

