

Artist deconstruction: a starry night

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Artist Deconstruction: A Starry Night If there is one thing in this life that cannot be escaped, it is art. Art takes over our visual and audio senses as well as sensation of touch and emotion. Not only does art take over our senses, but it also does something wonderful to our mental status. It raises awareness and stimulates our brains. Some art can touch us on a very deep emotional level. I have chosen to write about a portrait painted by Vaccine van Gogh called Starry Night, which was painted in June 1889. This painting depicts the view outside van Sago's sanitarium room window at night.

How does van Gogh use visual imagery to depict the four visual cures in this painting? How does the physiology of the eye help see the four visual cures? The visual cortex has cells that respond to a spot of light while others noted the edges of objects, certain angles of lines, specific movements, colors or the space between lines (Lester 2011). The use of visual imagery is used in the form of color, form, depth and movement. The first thing that I noticed in this painting was the overwhelming night sky, which takes up most of the background.

The color that is most prominent in the painting is blue. This has a connection with the sea and sky which each relate to movement of the cool dark colors. Eleven fiery yellow stars that look like huge fireballs illuminate this whole piece and contrast with the cool blue, fluid night sky which shows variety of shades of blue and grey. There is also the crescent moon at the top right hand corner that radiates an almost orange, brighter light from the rest of the stars. The view of the night sky and village is partially blocked by this huge cypress tree.

The tree has a black and green coloring which stands out. The houses are tiny and painted in the bottom right corner of the painting and blend in well with the forest and mountains. The architecture of the village is simple and no light illuminates the village, giving the impression that everyone there is probably asleep. The use of form is evident in this painting by the use of the dot to dot effect and with the use of lines. The dot to dot effect leads your eyes in a particular way oiling over the hills. The spacing between the stars and the curving shapes create a dot to dot effect.

The use of lines that are swirling, appear to be swishing across the background in a wax. Y motion and seem to be merging at the center to form this spiral like formation. All of the swirling lines in the sky direct your eyes around the painting. Both forms have a lot to do with movement within the painting as I believe the forms, shapes and spirals in the painting are meant to be a manner of expression and used to convey emotion. This is an abstract painting, which creates depth by using texture cues by conveying depth to the edges and texture to boundaries.

I perceive this painting of having an illusion of constantly being in motion. The uses of horizontal lines is used to create depth in the night sky, while the vertical lines on the cypress tree draw the viewer to the object as it takes over the countryside. The curving lines of the cypress tree mirror the sky, which also create depth in the painting. Since humans see in three dimensions the use of depth in this painting is brought out by the size, color, ND lighting and through perspective.

The painting also has movement as it shows motion and has what I perceive to be a sense of flowing movement. The pattern of the waves within the cypress tree, the layers of lines within the stars and the spiral in the sky all amplify the sense of motion. The lines in the painting show movement in the sky as well as distance. The lines that make up the building get thinner as your eye looks further and deeper into the painting. The use of texture within the painting is visually meant to provide a sense of motion along with the curvy forms in the sky giving the illusion of the wind blowing.

My interpretation of Starry Night is just one of the many and it remains very much an elusive work to art critics and students alike. Because nobody really knows Van Gogh's intention of painting this piece, everybody seems to be using different codes to decipher what Van Gogh was trying to bring across. For me, the painting communicated this love he had for God's beautiful creations, and yet, there is this sense of loneliness as if no one really saw the world as he saw it.