

Research paper on comparison of two sculptures

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Sculptures: A. Edgar Degas, The Little Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer; cast in 1922 from a mixed-media sculpture modeled ca. 1879–80, Bronze, partly tinted, with cotton skirt and satin hair ribbon, on a wooden base H. 41 1/4 in. (104. 8 cm)B. Enthroned Virginca. 1175–1200, poplar with paint 33 15/16 x 8 x 7 in. (86. 2 x 20. 3 x 17. 8cm)

Degas: Fourteen Year Old Dancer

The Little Fourteen Year Old Dancer is a classic sculpture where several whims and ideas are collected into one single work. The expressive and querying look of the girl’s face seems to enshrine beauty and directness at the same time with the attire also an important part of the whole work.

Degas seems to imbue certain innocence in the work especially with the descriptive ribbon and skirt where there is also a whiff of sexual proclivity. The bronze is also very suggestive in its shaping and colour.

Enthroned Virgin:

Perhaps one of the most famous sculptures of the Medieval Age, the Enthroned Virgin is slim and unlike the Degas dancer is almost ethereal like in character. The facial expression of the sculpture demonstrates a certain

sense of misery and intensity with the throne being quite an important part of the whole work. The pain which has not survived well after almost a thousand years must have been very important to the sculpture. The elongated face is typical of the works in those times and shows a certain reverence to the Virgin Mary.

Although both works are separated by hundreds of years there are similarities. The girl's and the Virgin Mary's expression are similarly serious and ethereal with the former showing a playful wit and the latter sitting in a sort of rebuff. The way the female body is shaped demonstrates considerable differences however with the girl quite plump and voluptuous while the Virgin Mary is slim and almost board like in appearance. The base and the throne could also be said to have similarities between them as support for the figures in their diverse messages.

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