

Elisabeth vigee le brun essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Have you ever looked at a piece of art and wondered how it could be based on real life, because it was just so beautiful? Well Elisabeth Vigee Le Brun was able to paint in such new and exciting ways; people were left wondering just this. Elisabeth Vigee Le Brun was a woman of many talents. In her life time she came up with new ways of painting, revolutionized fashion in France, and overcame any prejudice thinking because she was a woman. Before dying at the age of eighty-seven, she had gained the respect of women and men all across the world.

Being a female artist in the eighteenth century was not easy, especially when you had to keep a career and your life together during the French Revolution. But Elisabeth Vigee Le Brun is still respected for being able to do all of these things today (Encyclopedia of World Biography 402-403).

Throughout her life Elisabeth Vigee Le Brun lived an amazing, and gifted life, coming up with new ways of painting that captured the attention of anyone who saw them. Her art was seen throughout France, Italy, Austria, and Russia. She is well known for her genius way of painting, and professionalism as an artist.

Vigee Le Brun painted more than 660 pieces in France and other countries before and after the French Revolution. She was able to combine her talent as a painter with her charming personality. Her portraits make every woman or man in them look exquisite, almost near perfection. Elisabeth Vigee Le Brun was one of the most successful artists of her time, which was unusual for a woman in the eighteenth century. The work she is most famous for today are the paintings she did in 1779. These were her series of portraits of Queen Marie Antoinette.

Over the next ten years she painted the Queen more than 30 times, bringing instant fame to Vigee Le Brun (Steadman). It all started in Paris, on April 6, 1755 when Louis Vigee and Jeanne gave birth to their first child, a new born girl named Elisabeth-Louise. Vigee Le Brun's interest in art started as early as six, while she was sent to convent school. She would repeatedly get in trouble for decorating her and her schoolmates copy books and coloring the walls with faces and landscapes. Throughout her whole life, her creativity, and daring attitude towards trying new things helped her into fame.

Vigee Le Brun had set her mind on being an artist when her father said, "You will be a painter, my child, if ever there was one" (Moffat). As a young child Vigee Le Brun enjoyed spending hours trying new things and expanding her love for art. The good times did not last, in May, 1768 her father died. Vigee Le Brun was thirteen years old and heartbroken at her loss. Vigee Le Brun then began using art as an escape from the grief she was going through. By the age of fifteen she was earning enough as a painter to help support her family, who was struggling after the death of her father.

In the autumn of 1774, when she was nineteen, Vigee Le Brun was accepted into Academy of St. Luke. This was a huge accomplishment not only for her, but women everywhere because only four women were accepted into the academy. This is where she met the man she would marry, Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun. He was a well known picture dealer, who helped her with her career. In 1780, Vigee Le Brun gave birth to her only daughter, Jeanne Julie Louise, who was one of Vigee Le Brun's greatest joys in life. Elisabeth had become an instant success using her charm, wit, and beauty to her advantage (Moffat and Mossman).

Vigee Le Brun's time spent living in France was not only spent on her art, but expanding her large social life and setting new fashion trends. At this time Paris was fun and carefree before the French Revolution of 1789 released its horrors on it. But the outbreak of the revolution changed everything, and with all of the violence around, she fled France with her daughter to find safety in Italy (Moffat and Mossman). When she returned, Paris was a completely different place. However, the demand for her art had not changed. Vigee Le Brun is considered a painter of the rococo period.

Rococo is best described as an eighteenth century art style that places importance on the carefree life rather than grand heroes. Originally the rococo fashion started in Paris, where Vigee Le Brun was born. It changed the way people looked at art and the world in general (Bleiberg). Vigee Le Brun not only used the rococo style in her art, but also to influence fashion, persuading women to wear simple, high waist shifts, which would be an important stepping stone in changing fashion forever. By refusing to put powder in her hair, she made being natural beautiful.

If it weren't for her innovations we might still be wearing Victorian gowns and wigs. She made fashion and styles for young women, such as herself, more daring and interesting (Steadman). Vigee Le Brun brought artistic integrity in being a woman artist. She created interest in her art with her exploration of the relationships between creativity and sexuality in the eighteenth century (Oliver). So as you can see, Vigee Le Brun changed the way people look at women in general. For the remaining years in her life she enjoyed her art and the social lifestyle she lived.

After a short amount of time, her parties were almost as famous as her artwork. In 1813, Monsieur Le Brun, Vigele Le Brun's husband, died. But she says even though this caused her grief, it was nothing compared to the death of her daughter in 1819. The last of her years were spent on her art, which was still in high demand, but on March 30, 1842, Madame Elisabeth Vigele Le Brun died peacefully, in Paris, at the age of eighty-seven. And in accordance to her wishes, she was buried in the cemetery at Louveciennes.

Vigele Le Brun lived a long, amazing life, and along the way she created works of art that inspire us even today (Moffat and Steadman). In the eighteenth century women were only seen as housewives, and were expected to be proper and play a certain role with a good attitude and smile on their faces. So for a woman to be so successful on her own, at such an early age was a great accomplishment. Over the years Vigele Le Brun had many accomplishments, such as establishing a salon in her home, as well as her social life blossoming as she became more famous.

In 1783 she was admitted to the French academy of arts, which was a great accomplishment not only for Vigele Le Brun, but for women all over the world, for it was very uncommon to be accepted into such a program if you were a woman at this time (Moffat and Mossman). She was an inspiration and leader to many, showing that women can be successful and strong, as she influenced fashion, art, and ways of living that were important stepping stones to creating the society we live in today (Steadman).

All in all, Madame Elisabeth Vigele Le Brun led a fantastic, inspiring life.

Whether it is what she had to go through day to day, to how she changed our

world, Elisabeth Vigee Le Brun is an important, and inspiring woman that has changed our world forever. She came up with new ways of painting, made fashion trends across Europe, and set an example for women across the world to stand up for themselves. Elisabeth Vigee Le Brun changed the world using her own two hands and a paint brush.

Works Cited

<http://www.arthistoryarchive.com/arthistory/rococo/Elisabeth-Vigee-Lebrun.html>