

Works of jacques louis david and damier

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Thesis statement: The art works of Jacques Louis David (Neoclassicism), Delacroix (Romanticism) and Delacroix (Realism) have similar themes of nationalism and patriotism.

Neoclassicism served the aims of the new regime by exalting the civic and patriotic virtues of the Early Romans for the emulation of the public. It was Jacques Louis David, a painter educated in Rome, who was at the forefront of the movement. Among his best known works are *The Death of Socrates*, *The Death of Brutus* and the grandiose *Coronation of Napoleon*. But his masterpiece is *The Oath of the Horatii*, which shows three sons swearing to their father to defend their country, while their sisters lament hopelessly by. The painting is an interesting study of lines, contrasting diagonals expressing energy and action for the men, and curves expressing feminine weakness and grace for women. The *dramatis personae* are set against an austere background of Roman architecture. In the neoclassic work of David, the figures make grand theatrical gestures and the composition resembles that of figures acting upon a stage.

During the period of Romanticism, the painter worked quickly, freer and looser brush strokes giving evidence of the process of artistic creation. Another important aspect of Romanticism was an interest in social issues, leading to a larger participation and concern in the events of the time. This is seen in the works of Eugene Delacroix, as in his Moorish scenes of men and wild beasts in physical conflict. He cultivated surface texture, *impasto* and used a rich palette of colors. Delacroix also pursued the same theme in his *Jacob Wrestling with an Angel* and in his North African paintings of turbaned men battling with tigers. Delacroix, however, is known best for his *Liberty*

Guiding People, a patriotic painting of the French Revolution, in which the central figure of a woman beckons the soldiers forward with the flag she raises high above the field of the dead and wounded, while the drummer boy beside her valiantly charges with a pistol upraised. These two figures which form strong vigorous diagonals stand out amidst the smoke and confusion of the battle.

An important realist is Honoré Daumier, whose rare gift for social satire found expression in his prints, political cartoons and paintings. While he lashed out at the corruption and hypocrisy of the privileged class, as in *The Legislature*, he had a profound sympathy for the poor and the oppressed, as in *The Third Class Carriage* and *The Washerwoman*. Daumier had a sense of the dramatic moment revealed in a single look or gesture. He also had the gift of capturing the essential spirit of human relationships. His paintings were distinguished by his expressive and masterful lines, as well as his skillful chiaroscuro.

Conclusion:

Many works of art influence the way we think, act and feel. They can cause us to laugh at certain phenomena, raise our voices in protest over certain matters, or see a social reality which had never been apparent before. They can bring about in us decisions to collectively change, correct, or improve upon the human condition.

The art works of David, Delacroix and Daumier were all able to perform social function of art for they sought to influence the people, they created to be seen or used in primary public situations and they expressed and described social aspects of existence as opposed to individual and personal kinds of

experiences.

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