

Free how the milkmaid art relates to one of the philosophy theory essay example

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



Visual art is painting that has been brought to life, and which can be perceived by the human eye to form meaning. Visual art contains paintings, sculptures, photography and filmmaking, and decorative arts such as ceramics and interior design.

My subject of discussion is “ The Milkmaid.” The painting was created in the year 1658 by the famous painter called Jan Vermeer. According to Liedtke (p. 2), though the painting is called the milkmaid it actually shows a housemaid at the time referred to as a kitchen maid. A housemaid was in charge of taking care of the house doing dishes, cooking and washing clothes whereas a milkmaid was in charge of milking a cow.

The picture shows a fairly young lady wearing a linen head cap, a blue apron with her sleeves rolled up carefully pouring milk in a container made of clay. The scene is set on a plain room. There are various types of bread on the working table. She is standing in front of a window that brings light to the room. An object referred to as a foot warmer is set on the floor. There is also a small basket dangling on the wall next to the window. The painter uses illusion. He does not let the light downcast the weight of the young woman. During the times when the painting was done, maids were seen as sexual beings. They were depicted to satisfy men’s sexual desires. They were not respectable people in the society. Everything was associated with them such as paintings that were previously done of them had an erotic scene.

Vermeer goes against the belief that was set by those before him and portrayed a maid as a hard-working respectable woman. He calls the painting “ The Milkmaid,” not the kitchen maid that he had actually painted (Liedtke 2). It gives the kitchen housemaid a more respectable status as a

milkmaid was regarded to have skills; hence, more honored than the lowly housemaid.

The painters in that age used beautiful women and symbols that depicted them as sexual objects. Though Vermeer has also used sexual symbols they represent the maid as a sexual being rather than a sexual object. There is a tile behind the foot warmer that had the image of cupid. It can be taken to mean that the woman was thinking about a man that she desires. The foot warmer was also seen as an object of sexual arousal as it warmed the woman from the waist and below.

The woman, who is of a humble background due to her dressing, is making food that will be enjoyed by a big family as it was at the time. Her hard work is by the goodness of others; hence, she is of virtue. The woman is making bread pudding by using stale bread and milk. The stale bread, which could have been otherwise useless, is given value and worth.

During that time, domestic chores were hugely praised and encouraged. It was seen as something that every female had a responsibility to perform. It is seen in the Dutch paintings and literature of the time (Liedtke 2). Vermeer uses what is accepted to arise what is unexpected. The woman was supposed to be a domestic worker, but the maid who was a domestic worker was a sexual object meant to evoke and satisfy sexual desires in men. They were not supposed to have sexual desires.

Vermeer has sourced mainly visual and literary works to create this piece. Works of painters such as Gerrit Dou, who depicted maids as beings with attractive women with a small waist and sexually suggestive symbols were used. Vermeer uses a fairly built woman who was not what an attractive

woman was seen to be at that time.

Vermeer brings out romance with his painting in a way that painters of his time did not. He sees hard work as being attractive and built in terms of body weight as something to be appreciated while his peers appreciated things such as curves and small waists. He gives value to the maids who were looked down upon. He appreciates those who were not honored and set them as respectable members of society.

Rene Desecrates is a famous philosopher, who just likes Vermeer, spent most of his lifetime in Dutch. He was, however, of French origin, though it was not at the same time frame of living in the same place the experienced similar situations. He began his philosophical journey while he was working with the military in Dutch, while he was studying for his law degree.

Desecrates is referred to as "the father of modern philosophy." He sets himself aside by thinking in ways that those that came before him did not think. His ideas were based on two things. First, that the things that were believed to be true could be put in doubt. Second, he defied explanations that existed on natural phenomena.

He believes that any belief that can have any doubt is not true. He first sets out to prove his existence, which he believes is true as there is no possible doubt that can be derived from it. He then proceeded to prove the existence of God and the fact cannot be a liar. He went against the beliefs that were believed to be true by putting them to test by using doubt.

Desecrates' system of thought was based on ethics. He believed that one should be guided to do what is right by possessing virtues. What one deems to be right? One's actions should be guided by reasons. However, the

reasons were different with diverse people as their past experiences, the knowledge they had and mental state differed.

He focuses on morality, saying that what is good brings spiritual pleasure rather than the bodily pleasures that most people thought at the time.

Spiritual fulfillment was much better than bodily satisfaction gives a person peace, which would enable them to go on with their day to day activities, achieving their level best to reach self-actualization.

Vermeer uses desecrates ideas by setting himself apart from his peer. He gave the maid value while those before him depicted a maid as a sexual object (Liedtke 2). It is similar to what Desecrate did by going against what people believed was true and constructing his system of knowledge, falsifying beliefs that could be put to doubt. Maids were just like the females in the royal families, but what people had believed was true made them be looked down upon. The belief that every maid were sexually corrupt can be put in doubt. It is so as they all did not have the same upbringing and did not have the same line of thought; everyone thinks in their independent way. Desecrate based his teachings on morality. Doing what is good. Vermeer's painting was moral as did not represent the maid in a sexual manner. He did what was right not going by what people thought to be true. He based his painting on values. His painting was not meant to bring bodily pleasure but spiritual pleasure. The maid was working hard, earning an honest living which would lead to spiritual fulfillment.

Hume believed that all the knowledge that one holds is as a result of past experiences, and experiences. They are made of perception, the way one organizes the information that they receive to give meaning to their

environment (Preston 2). He classified perceptions to be of two kinds that include Impressions and ideas. An impression is an image that is created by something; it does not come from the perceiver, and rather it is from the object, which is being perceived. An idea is an image that forms in the mind of the perceiver about the object being perceived. The idea comes out of free will while an impression forcefully enters the mind of the perceiver. Hume believes that imaginations are as a result of integrating many simple ideas to form a more complex idea (Preston 2). The imagination is as a result of ideas it does not just happen. Imagination has to be somehow related to the ideas that one has. There has to be something linking the ideas with the imagination.

Vermeer uses a Hume's system of ideas as he gathers the information that was previously available to him to create his painting. He uses paintings done previously of maids to create his piece. Though, it went against what those before him had created. It is with the knowledge and experience that he had previously realized that he could create his painting.

The Vermeer imagination of his painting arose from ideas that he previously had. It is clear that a lot of the thought was put into the creation of the painting. He did not want his painting to be like the others; he wanted his to stand out, which we can agree that it did stand out.

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