

# Essay on art and architecture: museum paper

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Last December Holidays, I paid a visit to San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA). From their collection, in their Painting + Sculpture section, I liked the artwork done by Louise Bourgeois.

### **Artist: Louise Bourgeois**

Nationality: French- American

Life dates: 25th December 1911 – 31 May 2010

Media: bronze, stainless steel and marble.

Describe the work of art physically.

Maman is a nine meters high spider sculpture. Its composition is steel, marble and bronze. The sculpture embodies both strength and fragility. It hovers on its legs that act as a protective asset and a cage to a sac of eggs.

### **The formal elements of the sculpture are its grayish color and magnificent size.**

What was the intention of the artist?

The artist intended to portray her mother with metaphors such as spinning, protection, weaving and protection. Through the artistic work, Bourgeois shows us how the mother was the best friend that she ever had.

Similar to a spider, I think she intends to say that her mother was a weaver.

A spider produces silk both to bind prey and to construct cocoons.

The artist's background is that of being brought up in a family that was in the business of tapestry restoration. The workshop was under her mother's stewardship. Therefore, she had to be as clever as a spider. Probably, she set her business where she could attract a lot of customers. She used all honest tricks to gunner in profit.

Similarly, because spiders act as friends by eating disease-causing

mosquitoes, the mother was friendly and protected her household from calamities such as diseases, anger and attack. The stainless steel and bronze composition eludes power and strength. She protected her family business from the competitions and other unethical business behaviors.

Thus, the spider eludes awe and fear, given by her massive height and strength. However, her slender legs supporting the massive figure portray an almost poignant vulnerability. Thus, I think the artist intended to tell us that, like most women, her mother was still vulnerable to the threats of the society around.

### **Do you think she succeeded?**

Largely, I think the artist succeeded trying to demonstrate the character of her mother as exactly portrayed by the sculpture.

However, in another perspective, the writer failed by bringing out the ambiguity of portraying maternity as both protector and predator. Paternity is the side that possess these two characteristics in all communities.

### **Is the Maman aesthetically pleasing?**

Yes. I like this sculpture because of its ability to evoke a feeling of strength and confidence.

### **Do you relate to the subject matter?**

Yes. Similar to the subject matter, my mother is strong and protective. She is friendly and ensures that our family is safe. She ensures the well being of our family business. She is clever yet vulnerable like any other woman can be, hence requires support from our father and other older family members and the society at large.

## **Does it evoke any emotion?**

Yes, the sculpture evokes awe and fear, given its massive height and strength.

What aspect of color theory does it use?

It uses subtractive color system, since it reflects light.

How does it use space (visual space)?

The spider sculpture occupies a large visual space, hovering ominously on legs as arches.