

Sample essay on mona lisa

[Art & Culture](#), [Painting](#)



Introduction

Hierarchic scale refers to the act or process of manipulating the size and the space in a given picture. Usually, this is done in order to emphasize the importance of some specific object in the picture. For instance, when an individual undertakes to paint a picture of some woman in a farm of vegetables, one could do several things to the picture in order to emphasize the importance and the value that is attached to the object in question. If the most important thing in that picture is the shoe that the woman is wearing, then the person painting the picture would make the shoe a bit larger by bringing them forward. This will have an impact of catching the eyes of the viewers and as such, the woman would not become the focus. On a similar note, if the person paintings had the intention of having the woman as the focus of the picture, then they would make sure that the woman would be painted larger. By doing this, the shoes would be smaller. As such, the focus of the painting would have shifted from that of the shoes to that of the woman in question. In most cases, this technique is used in artworks such as sculpture and painting. When doing this, the artist employs unnatural proportions to explain the importance of a figure or object in art.

One work of art that employed this technique is the art that Michaelangelo did - Pieta (1501). Michaelangelo effectively tampered with the scale of figures, with the effect being the enabling of Mary to support the limp body of lifeless son easily. As such, if one was to stand up the two figures that of Mary and Jesus, then Mary would look huger. The art by Michaelangelo is a good example to explaining this term since it clearly brings out the concepts well and through it, we get to learn the importance and the reasons as to

why hierarchic scale is such an important technique in art.

Genre painting, on the other hand, refers to the day to day painting of scenes, the ordinary work or even recreation, which is depicted in a realistic manner. In most cases, it is used to describe the manner in which the painters always specialized in only one kind of picture as compared to the artists who involved themselves in various genres. Genre painting is a tactic that artists have used in ensuring that they come up with paintings that depict the day to day events and lives. Many works of art have been made by the artists using this technique. For instance, the artists used this technique of art to come up with a picture of guardroom of gaming soldiers (64. 65. 5) This work of art is a good example in explaining what genre painting is because unlike most other works, the artist managed to employ the technique to clearly bring out the lifestyle that people depended on during the ancient times.

In evaluating and interpreting art, three theories are used. These theories may include the formal theory, the expressional theory and the contextual theory. In one way or another, all these theories play a very significant role to how a work of art is understood. Of important to note is that Harold Osborne (Aesthetics and Art Theory) was responsible for identifying these three means through which we get to think of the art works.

All works of art always have some physical properties that make them different from the others. The arts of work are always made of materials, they take different shapes, they have texture, they take space and have different colors. Such works of art are also apprehended over a given time of period. Importantly is the fact that all these aspects that we have mentioned

above as regards to the work of art are, in a certain way, organized together to attain the formal properties. This is what gives rise to the formal theory of art.

However, the presentational theory of art is different when compared to the formal art because it is identified using different means. The works of art, as already argued above, have formal properties in them that make up the formal theory. However, they present themselves in some recognizable basic ways. For instance, a 'naturalistic' or 'realistic' art is used to serve reality. Idealistic art, on the other hand is used to refer to the art which improves an existing reality. Abstract arts do not mimic any form of reality and as such, take that name. All these classifications of art depending on the extent to which they present some form of realism or abstraction are discussed under the armpit of the presentational theory.

The last theory of a work of art is the instrumental theory. When talking about this art, what people should take into account is the purpose which a work of art has served. For instance, all the works of art throughout history have accomplished given purposes. For instance, there are some arts that served as the instruments of indoctrinating people on the importance attached to some beliefs and personalities of political and religious nature. It is the purpose with which the art acted that best explains the instrumental theory of art because it is used to explain the purpose and role that it played.

Any work of art has the above discussed qualities. Because of this, it therefore necessary to use this framework in analyzing the various works of art. In this paper, the two theories that I will use are the formal theory and

the expression theory. This is because these two theories are the most basic ones when it comes to any work of art.

The Mona Lisa refers to a portrait of half-length of a woman which was done by an artist of the Italian origin, known by the name Leonardo da Vinci. This work of art has achieved several things when compared to other art works. For instance, there are arguments that this work of art is the most written about and the most parodied in the world. Above this, it is the most visited and the most sung about work of art to the present moment. As such, this work of art is important in our studies and by interpreting and evaluating it using the formal and expression theories. Through this, people will get to understand this work of art more and more.

Analyzing and interpreting the Mona Lisa painting using the formal theory, the painting depicts a woman seated in a mountainous landscape. Leonardo portrays the woman dressed in Florentine fashion of her day and is in a seating position and this shows Leonardo's shading model. The portrait has achieved global recognition and universal fame, mainly due to its enigmatic expression. The portrait shows Mona Lisa having a slight smile which in effect enters the delicate atmosphere which pervades the whole painting. Leonardo achieved this through using the technique referred to as sfumato. In this technique, there is always a continuous interaction of shade and light. By this, it becomes difficult to tell the time of the day that the portrait intended to show. This portrait was so large, taking the measurements (1479-1538) and it was painted using oil. Leonardo used the oil to paint the picture on a piece of wood to give a clear impression and come up with a portrait that would remain significant for several years to come. This is the

formal theory of the work of art. Although Leonardo did not color the portrait himself, his student in art colored it in a marvelous color giving it an attractive nature. The portrait is a bit superior when it is compared to the other works of art that were done during this time.

The presentational theory of this work of art dictates that it takes a realistic and naturalistic nature. This is because of the reason that it is used to serve some reality. The portrait is crafted to give The Mona Lisa an enigmatic expression. In the portrait, Leonardo managed to portray Mona Lisa as a real object that lived as compared to the unrealistic or arbitrary things. The painting, to a great extent appeared as if it was real in life.

In conclusion, the works of art have a special place in the current world as they are appreciated a lot in the present times. Through the various evaluative theories that have been discussed above, we get to understand the nature they take in the modern world. We also get to understand them better.

Polykleitos' Spear Bearer

This is a sculpture that arose between 450 and 440 B. C. It was done by Polykleitos. Analyzing the sculpture through the formal theory, the first issue that comes out clearly is that this sculpture was made up of bronze during its original time. However, due to the destructions that were caused with time, it only exists in a marble Roman replica. Its height is approximately 8 heads tall and as such, it stands in a strong position. It however leans more to one direction than the other.

This sculpture may be classified as a naturalistic work of art. This is mainly due to the fact that Polykleitos used this type of art to connote and celebrate

the natural perfection of a male body. As such, this sculpture creates a realistic nature. This could be argued so considering the fact that Polykleitos had a tendency of doing his things with a lot of perfection in defining the sculpture.

In conclusion, the spear bearer differs a lot from the Mona Lisa art. Whereas Mona Lisa is a painting, the Spear bearer is a sculpture. This marks the difference between the two.

Edouard Manet, Luncheon on the grass

This is an art that was done by Edouard Manet. It was completed in 1863 in Paris, France, taking the realism nature

This painting was a depiction of naked females that were accompanied by fully clothed men. This painting raised a lot of eyebrows for various reasons. For instance, the adoption of the stark of nudity that represented the women was in contrast to the men who were in full clothes. Secondly, Manet, in making this painting, applied all familiar models for the figures.

This piece of art was made of canvas. It was a painting that, similar to the portrait of Mona Lisa, was painted using oil on an object. Taking into account the presentational theory on the piece of art, this painting falls under the category of realism as it portrayed the day to day events that happen in the world.

It is necessary to conclude that this work of other, when analyzed using the formal theory and the presentational theory, differs from the above discussed arts. For instance, it takes a different form and it is painted on a canvas, different to Mona Lisa's portrait.

Starry Night

This was a painting that was done by Vincent van Gogh in June 1889. The painting, to a large extent, is used to depict the outer part of a room window (sanitarium) at night. This window is located in the southern parts of France. However, of importance to note is that Vincent did not paint this art at night. Rather, he did the painting in daylight using the memory he had about the window. Through this art, Vincent turned towards working on greater imaginative arts.

This painting was relatively big, as it measured 73.7 cm by 92.1 cm. Vincent did the painting using oil on the canvas material. He also managed to employ the use of different colors to bring out a perfect painting that was, to somehow similar to the imaginations he had developed about the window at night. In the painting, the central part portrayed a village which was under a swirling sky. However, there is a little rapport of the actual scene. The combination of the colors that he chose brought out a shiny and attractive painting.

As already argued above, not much is said about the presentational theory about this painting. However, it is a naturalistic type.

Marilyn Diptych

This work of art is very different from all the works that have been discussed above. Importantly, this is because Marilyn Diptych consists of several silkscreen paintings representing one person. Warhol made this painting about four months after Marilyn Monroe died. These screen paintings were based on Monroe's photograph, which Warhol picked from the 1953 Niagra film. It is not yet clear why Warhol repeated the image. However, by

repeating it, many people have argued that he aimed to evoke the presence of Monroe in the media.

Analyzing the painting using the formal theory, the painting is made in black and white colors. However, it is through this contrast of the black and white colors that, combined with the effect of fading that is observable at the right panel, that we get to conclude that the star was indeed a mortal. The painting was medium in nature and it was painted on a canvas using acrylics. Its measurements were 2054 x 1448 x 20 mm.

This painting falls under the realistic category as it is painted by referring to an individual who lived on the earth.

In conclusion, this paper has addressed the two most important theories of analyzing any work of art. Through applying the theories to the selected works of art, one therefore gets into a better position to understand art in a simpler manner.