

Peter howson and joan eardley scottish art essay sample

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



The first artist I will be writing about is Peter Howson. He was born in Ayrshire in the year 1958 and lived there for most of his life. He had a great education as he studied at Glasgow School of Art and then moved to London to finish his Masters Degree. Practically all of his work is based on war. He always uses strong tone and the palette he uses is limited and earthy. The emotion Howson manages to convey in all of his paintings is often dark and depressing which links to the problems he has had with mental health. At no point, in all of Howsons work of which I have seen, does he convey the emotion of happiness. Howson has suffered many mental health issues, some of which have been expressed in his work. Howson always uses large brush strokes which give the paintings power, however, he still focuses his detail on certain areas, which are very obvious when looking at his paintings.

One such dark painting is “ Famine Five”, one of the many paintings Howson produced based on war. It was created in 2009 and is oil on canvas. The figure is a drained looking woman, painted from the chest upwards. This piece is focused on war; Howson has managed to convey the effects of war, by exaggerating the expression on the woman’s face. She looks starved, depressed and tired looking. This is shown through the deep wrinkles in her face and how big and drooping her eyes are. The palette used in this painting is all dark, earthy oranges and a deep blue is used for the background. This contrast between the orange and blue helps the woman stand out from the deep, dull blue sky in the background, making her have an almost orange glow to her skin.

The texture Howson has created on the woman is very rough, almost like her features have been scratched. This effect has been created by using a dry paint brush, and what looks like scraping the paint off. This is to show us that she is dirty as you can see her skin has black marks and scuffs all over it. The woman's face is the focal point, just by once glance, you get drawn in by her eyes. She looks as if she is longing for something, food, friends, and family. She is laid up against a wall in the streets, again, showing she is too weak to hold herself upwards. The colours used on her face are dirty browns, showing she has been on the streets for quite some time. It is not a very realistic painting because of the way Howson has put more emphasis into the woman's features. She no longer looks realistic, she has an almost cartoon look about her. I believe that this links back to not only the effects of war, but also when Howson was going through a rough patch in his life, and wanted to express it and show that he felt as if he was stuck in the middle of a war.

The second artist I am going to write about is Joan Eardley. She was born in May 1921 and she lived in Scotland for most of her life. Eardley also went to Glasgow School of Art and she focuses most of her work on children who live on the streets of Glasgow. Every one of Joan Eardleys pictures are very sketchy and messy making her paintings very unrealistic, also the colours she uses are all similar and pale. In all of Joan Eardleys painting, she manages to convey the personality of the sitter through the use of blending colours together and focusing her attention on the background. Her inspiration is James Cowie, a Scottish artist born in 1886. He had taught her

at school and passed on is advice to make her focus on the real world and that she should make her work more realistic than linier.

The painting I am going to evaluate is “ Girl with a Squint”. It was created in the year 1961 and it is oil on canvas painting. The figure in the painting is a young girl, aged at about five years old, standing on the streets of Glasgow. The palette that Eardley has used are very pale and the way she has painted it is very sketchy and chaotic. The colours used to create the little girl are all very similar, there are pinks for the face, reds for her shawl and the pinks are brought into her small blue dress. The red shawl seems to blend into the background, which is a graffiti covered wall. Eardley has painted the wall with untidy, thick brush strokes, making the wall look incredibly dirty and horrible. There is a ripped down poster to the girls left, showing us that the street is unclean and not well looked after. By making the colours used on the girl very similar to the wall, gives us the idea that the little girl is fading away into the busy streets of Glasgow, and that she doesn't get noticed by anybody. Her innocence is shown through the position of her body; her arms are tucked up at her chest and one of her hand is at her mouth. This automatically lets us know that she is shy, innocent and possibly even scared. Eardley shows us how the little girl is feeling and how Eardley viewed the girl herself.

Out of both of the artists, I personally prefer Peter Howsons work. His paintings are much stronger and you can really feel the emotion he has put into it through the strong use of colour and the exaggeration of facial expressions.