

Museum and online museum



**ASSIGN
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Judge, Stephanie Art 100 Essay Bibliography: " William-Adolphe Bouguereau Biography. " Bouguereau Biography. N. p. , n. d. Web. 01 Oct. 2012. . " MFAH | Top 100 Highlights | #1 - The Elder Sister. " MFAH | Top 100 Highlights | #1 - The Elder Sister. N. p. , n. d. Web. 22 Sept. 2012. . Online Museum Essay William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825-1905) The Elder Sister, 1869 Oil on canvas, 51 ? x 38 ? inches The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

One of the finest French artists of the 19th century thought of by many is William Bouguereau. He was well known for his traditional academic style and depicted paintings in such a way where they would seem life like and flawless taking away any imperfections. He was admired by the wealthy and known for painting portraits of others, in which he won many awards for. He also enjoyed painting portraits of his children. In Bouguereau's The Elder Sister he created a life like portrait of his daughter and son on canvas in 1869. One thing that distinguished him from other artists was his attention to precise detail.

It has been said that there were no other artists were as original that could create such beautiful paintings as him. When taking a closer look at this particular painting The Elders Sister, it becomes evident why he is considered one of the finest 19th century artists. Bouguereau's The Elder Sister is a traditional oil painting on canvas that measures 51 ? x 38 ? inches. At first glance the viewer will notice the overall soft contoured lines while looking at a pair of young children, whom are surrounded by rural landscape into the vanishing point that meets the cloudy blue-grey sky in the horizon.

The elements of analogous earth tones seen throughout the painting are accompanied by a few complimentary colors seen on the children's clothing

which produce a great sense of calmness and ease. The composition as a whole is asymmetrically balanced by a dark pigmented green bush in the right near corner which is placed beside the children. To the left of them is a small grayish house that displays fine lines and geometric shapes that depicts organic tall green trees that hover well above the house.

The positive shape and focal point of the composition is the elder sister whom is sitting in the near distance on a rock, which is covered by abstract textures and shades of green grass that surround the whole landscape. Slouched a bit forward, one arm is quietly holding her sleeping infant brother while cradling his small torso as her other arm rests vertically over his legs onto her right knee as she gazes directly at the viewer with an intense stare. The infant seems to be comfortable in her arms by the way he is laying. Noticeably the children are exquisitely portrayed leaving no signs of any flaws.

They are dressed in earth toned pristine clothing, which are painted with such delicacy and show great detail in the value. In the distance behind the space where the infant's head lays a small pond below what appears to be grassy hills and mountains, these all appear smaller than the children which create depth and distance. Above the horizon towards the vanishing point shows a sky filled with darkened clouds combined with lighter ones that appear to encompass the top portion of the plane down to the waist of the girl. The way in which Bouguereau painted represents how passionate he was in depicting what he saw.

The way the portrait is conveyed creates unity and keeps every element of the painting easy for the viewer to follow. One example would be the use of

rhythm and repetition used in the clouds. It is evident that he displayed complete control when creating the contoured and implied lines in the space. The overview of The Elder Sister is yet a timeless work of art and creates a perfected masterpiece of the quiet beauty of the children and the natural green hues of the landscape. The peaceful feeling that The Elder Sister recommends is something that one can take with them after viewing this work of art.

This is a painting that brings serenity and shows how siblings can care for one another. It is showed in the way the sister is holding her infant brother in her arms giving him a sense of ease. Bouguereau obviously has a passion for painting his children and demonstrates it through the soft delicate details. <http://www.mfah.org/art/100-highlights/Elder-Sister-Bouguereau/> In person Museum Paper OVER- MODELED SKULL 20th Century Vanuatu, Melanesia Different from any other art such as traditional arts are not actually created for any other reason other than religious rituals or conceivably community functions.

The OVER-MODELED SKULL is a dynamic piece of art from the twentieth century that caught my eye while I was at the Bowers Museum. This particular skull came from Vanuatu, Melanesia otherwise known as Oceania. It is an island in the South Pacific Ocean where only chiefs and men of high rank would be honored after their passing. After a year of someone of this rank died, the modeled skull would be created by a skilled craftsman to resemble the deceased man and then used in ceremonies and placed in their house.

It is believed that the spiritual power would remain there for about twenty years. After observing this body of material a few times over again, it is evident that this particular culture of Oceania takes pride in making such art and it is an important part of their everyday life. This modeled skull was composed from vegetable matter, sap, pigment and the deceased man's skull. Upon walking into the exhibition that was called Spirits and Headhunters I came across a well lit glass display that housed this art form.

At first glance I felt quite intimidated and chilled by overall structure of the mask. The structure itself was biomorphic and oval shaped resembling that of human form. The hollowed oval eyes that seemed like blackened tunnels were the focal point. The skull portrayed a long widened nose was the most prominent form of the man's face which made it appear to be closed form. There is a space where the mouth once was as if the man were to be half smiling. There are cracks in multiple places suggesting that this piece has been around for many years.

Complimenting the face are three dull contrasting colors that the craftsman used which are orange, black and brown giving a form of balance. The orange takes up most of the forehead painted in an upside triangle form and continues down the center of the face. The black covers the other part of the forehead as well as the eyes and the rest of the face. Towards the side by the temples is the color brown where the paint tends to end. Laterally the view is the side of the painted face which extends back to the rounded back of the skull which I was not able to view.

The foremost part of the skull towards the back appears to be marbled by different tones of beige. The structure itself seems hardened yet fragile. The

craftsman that made this traditional work of art possible for spiritual reasons created a simple yet unique face from the skull. Though my first impression was a bit startling I came to appreciate what this OVER- MODELED SKULL was about and entails. Since this is a way of life for the people of Oceania they would not look at this skull the same way others that were not educated on their way of life might.

This fragile looking skull teaches us about one of the traditions of the Oceania people. After one of the high ranking men passed a modeled skull was to be made by a local craftsman to resemble him so the people could keep his spirit alive. There were ceremonies and rituals that were held for twenty years after the skull was remodeled. The skull was kept in the man's house and after twenty years was disposed of because they thought the spirit couldn't survive longer than that. This shows how diverse the world is in art and how we might perceive what the meaning was intended to be.

<http://www.bowers.org/>