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New York Artist

Jean-Michel Basquiat is a renowned artist of New York, who got fame during 1980s, and fame he got is, however, unprecedented in the world of the art (Fretz). He is the exceptional black painter that has achieved the status of the numinous celebrity. He has turned the primitivist, romantic, and the expressionistic directions in order to create the work that delved into myth as well as in history, and played an important role in affirming the redemptive power of the art. In the paintings of Basquiat, the focus is on the textual imagery as well as on the specific visuals; each painting of Basquiat contains an immediate message because of their apparently spontaneous composition. His paintings, however, provide a lens that enable to view the urban decay and the beauty, as well as the injustices prevailing in the society. If we consider the Basquiat's painting named United, then it indicate a racial theme, and significantly depict parallel imaginary in order to highlight these themes. This painting, however, is a representation of the wide variety image, text, meaning, and the theme (Emmerling). Parallelisms is, however, also exists in the composition, i. e., in the techniques, characters, color schemes and the subjects. The stark and the simple design of the painting united are the attractive features that grab the attention. It is painted in three colors i. e., black, dark blue, and white, with a gloomy mood.

The painting represents a prisoner, who is flanked by two men, who can be considered as the police officers from the uniform, star badges and the hats. Furthermore, the contrast between the officers and the prisoners is direct; the officers are portrayed by white, and the prisoner in black, so the racial

implications are evident. However, the faceless men have arrested the black man. Further, a halo can be seen above the head of the prisoner, which is an indication of the Renaissance art of Italy, and Christian iconography, and this is a common symbol in the works of Basquiat, as it can be seen in most of the paintings of Basquiat. He has reserved this symbol in order to portray the black character, and to signify the prisoner's martyred status. Furthermore, a word LOANS is also evident in the painting on the building of the city, which is the representation of the loan officers who can usually be seen near the police stations of the city, from where the money for bail can be borrowed. Further, LOANS symbol is an indication geographical or the physical scene context, and a representation of the different urban environment. The painting is also pointing towards a fact that Basquiat has witnessed such a scenario in the New York, and is subjected to the racial discrimination during his lifetime. United is the representation of the mistreatment towards black living in the city, and the police discrimination, and thus representation is, however, common in the art of Basquiat. In this painting, Basquiat has included the pictorial as well as textual markers as an illustrative topography in order to establish a physical context. This image has, however, played a significant role in pointing out towards the increasing discrimination against black prevailing at that time in the New York. It helps the people to consider the rights of black, and letting them to live as a free citizen in the city.

References

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